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**NEW**  
**LANDLORD'S TALES;**

**OR,**

**JEDEDIAH IN THE SOUTH.**

Does your master travel upwards or downwards ?"—  
Downwards, I fear—." **BEAUX STRATAGEM.**

**IN TWO VOLUMES.**

**VOL. I.**

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**1825.**





NEW

## LANDLORD'S TALES.

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### INTRODUCTORY,

BY JEDEDIAH CLEISHBOTHAM.

**READER!** People, in this age, talk very freely of each other, as to their principles, their faculties, their incomes, and even their existence; of which we have no necessity for adducing any further proof, than my own case affords; a writer of considerable celebrity from the north having thought fit to assert, that I had “melted into thin air.”

So far from it,—I am stouter in body, than ever; my health is sound; my appetite good; and pork, which always disagreed with me, at Gandercleugh, now lieth as light as lamb upon my stomach.

Indeed, I am stouter than I wish to be—for, to speak candidly, the word “corpulent” would apply to my state, perhaps better than stout.” Then, as to my localities, which the above-mentioned writer hath also, in the easy tone of one who carries the world before him, chosen to term “imaginary localities”——They are no more imaginary, than his own.

No more, did I say? Nothing nearly so much. Who, I ask, shall pretend, with any thing like certainty to name the place wherein he resideth? Not a soul, I trow: on the contrary, the usual description of that author implies, that, although of high repute, he is enveloped in continued mystery. Whereas I openly avow, that I have long left Scotland, and care not a button who knoweth it; and that my abode at present is (and hath been since the thirty-first of October, in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and twenty, which, to the best of my recollection, was on a Tuesday) in the pleasantly situated village of Dulwich,

near London, within three doors of the Greyhound Inn.

Nor do I feel myself obligated to answer all, or indeed any, of the numerous questions which will, doubtless, be speir'd at me, anent my reasons for abandoning my school, and quitting the central parts of Scotland—that my school left me, is, however, a malignant and envious fiction, circulated by some who were enemies of mine; albeit they had no reason to be so. It may be, that I had outlived all my oldest friends and most valuable acquaintance there. It may be, that having parted with my school, I was not in circumstances to make such a figure in my native county, as (after the vast success of my publications) the world might have expected:—and, sorry I am to say, that the fate of my countryman, Andrew Selkirk, hath been pretty much my own. Tulit Alter—in great measure, the Honores—and ALL the profits of Poor Peter Pattieson's manuscripts left in my possession. It may be,

that, conceiving, like many others, my own reputation to stand as high as I wished it: I had a curiosity to discover, in person, how the folks in and near the metropolis of the empire talked of the Great Jedediah.

It may be, after all, that I had just a fancy for removing to the southward: for I was ever a bit of a humourist; and now, that my occupation is gone, I purpose to indulge myself, as far as a man innocently may, without asking leave of any one. And let me hear, I do beseech ye all—let me hear nothing of my former renown, however eminent that may have been. Of the history and origin of certain tales, I have apprized the public, upon a prior occasion; besides which, it hath already been more than hinted, that they have only served to advance the fame of another writer; while Jedediah, erst of Ganderclough, as the last three years have sufficiently testified, is as completely overlooked and forgotten, as if that calumny about the “thin air” had been ever so well

founded. Reader, it is sufficient with me, to have pleased every body, in my time. Now, if the fit takes me, I shall publish what, ten to one, will please nobody: the trouble is my own, the expense is my own, and, literary character (it appeareth) I have none to lose.

However, on further consideration, as a reason, such as it is, doth exist, for the appearance of the present publication; I shall consider my respectable name, and independent spirit, to be, in no way, lowered, by my entering upon the particulars thereof. While a schoolmaster, at Gandercleugh, Poor Pattieson, as, in another place, I have faithfully narrated, acted in the capacity of my usher, or assistant; and, though abounding in admirable qualities, he had two habits, of which, partial as I might be to him, I never could bring myself to approve. The one, was an utter carelessness about reclaiming, by severity or otherwise, such boys as were decidedly stupid and idle; while he would bestow the whole of



his attention upon those who appeared to have a pleasure in their studies; and the second, I have once already alluded to; a positiveness (namely) in argument, respecting cramp Latin passages, by no means becoming a person so low in the world as was that worthy man, when I first took him by the hand. To say the truth, in these discussions, Peter proved to be, more than once, in the right: and I judged it convenient, to counterbalance, if practicable, any conceit of himself that he might have assumed upon this or that fancied superiority, by the discovery of some flaw in his moral character, which might afford me what is called, in homely phrase, a hawk over him, while he continued to be employed in my concerns. Amid so scantily peopled a neighbourhood as that of Gandercleugh, I was not long of finding out, that my friend Peter, though himself, of a surety, under forty years of age, had a son living, who was nearly grown up. All this might be very well; only I happened

never to hear that Peter had been married : on the other hand, I must admit, that I never heard, he had not; but deeming it unlikely, I always assumed that such was the fact.

With unwearied curiosity, therefore, did I inquire after this young person, and every thing that belonged to him; but my inquiries were long carried on, with more diligence than success. I found, indeed, that my worthy usher maintained the lad (though he could hardly maintain himself), at a cottage, in the neighbourhood; that he passed most of his spare time with him; and that he instructed him, with unremitting assiduity, which, by the bye, I must say (alas, Pattieson, poor fellow, hath long been in his grave!) no man of his day was better qualified to do.

But I was likewise informed, and my own subsequent remarks justified the information, that Peter laboured upon rather an unpropitious soil. His own gentleness of disposition had led him to indulge and

spoil the lad; and afterwards, whatever might have been the natural parts of his charge, he grew humorsome and desultory in his reading; eager for every pleasure within his reach; and, either pining for such as were beyond it, or pondering, for ever, upon some wild expectations, or rather, imaginations of his own: a turn of mind, adverse to all laudable exertion, in every body; and fatal to those who must labour for their very bread. From the time of Peter Pattieson's decease, which occurred more than a twelvemonth before the appearance of my first set of volumes, entitled, " Tales of My Landlord, &c." I totally lost sight of this youngster; till, on my settling in the South, during the fall of the year eighteen hundred and twenty, as before expressed, I met with him, accidentally, in London; and learnt, that having come up thither, with a view of seeking his fortune, he had, as he conceived, found it.

His handsome, or rather, pretty face, and favourable person, soon attracted, by a

concurrence of odd circumstances, which (he thought) in the highest degree propitious, the notice of a young woman—so she called herself, but of a young woman, at least, nine years older than Jem Pattieson, who espoused him, and accommodated him with a fortune of one hundred and twenty pounds.

James Pattieson, if he could be said to have attended to any thing, had been a dabbler in literature; and, after a fashion of his own, was a bookish man. At all events, he had learned no trade which might enable him to make his way in the world; so, with a view of doing something, they expended the wealth which they seemed to consider as exhaustless, in setting up a small, dirty, obscure, ill-provided bookseller's shop and circulating library, on the northern side of the street, called the Barbican.

There, from regard to the memory of his excellent father, I was used, occasionally, to visit him; offering advice that never was so much as listened to, and suggesting

measures, that (if any earthly project can be secure) would have assured their success ; to which, the young man, or his wife, perversely and invariably objected.

Even when every thing seemed to be tolerably well about them, and they bore a smiling face to the world, I was vexed to the heart, at their goings on. No kind of steadiness—no regularity: the woman, idling, prating, dawdling, or sleeping: and poor James, careless in his accounts, and always a certain number of hours behind-hand with whatever he had to do. That the evil day must come, and come speedily, too, it was but too easy to foresee. How could a possibility exist of their being effectually assisted by me, or by any other friend? My only wonder was, that they kept the shop open, with some appearance of an established business, as long as they did! I will not, however, say, but that the young man might have held his head above water, had he met with a decent, managing, straight-forward person, for a wife:

Jem' had no vices that ever I heard of; none, I mean, which were of a flagrant description, and seemed likely to have led him into expense. His failings, and of those he had plenty, to be sure, were procrastination; a sort of visionary indolence, heedlessness, and an unhappy irresolution of temper, which pointed him out, an universal mark for petty plunder, as long as he had any thing left, of which he could be cheated.

And, perhaps, the most melancholy part of the affair was, that although his reigning faults were of that class, which usually indicates levity and facility of disposition—James had, in truth, when his habits of indolence were overcome, a great portion of his father's deep and peculiar feeling. I often found him low, even in tears, while there were no visible symptoms of particular distress at hand; and while he would earnestly, indeed peevishly, contend, that he was a happy man, and that his business gave him no kind of uneasiness. From all

this, it was surely natural to infer the existence of some secret, domestic trouble; and such inference proved to be too certainly and fatally grounded. Their marriage had been, what is commonly called, a love-match: on her side, at least, I may affirm, that it was a marriage arising out of mere inclination and passion. But when fondness began to droop, on the part of that vain, selfish, and slatternly coquet,—Pattieson, grateful for a former preference which had delivered him from utter beggary, still retained (call it by what name one will) much real affection for her.

One day, when I saw him in a more than ordinarily desponding mood, his behaviour became, in the course of my visit, more wild and incoherent, than I had ever before observed it. He produced liquor, and insisted upon my drinking with him; which, solely to pacify the poor youth, I did; having taken care, however, to dilute my own spirits copiously with water, while he took his unmixed. He then talked, after

a strange method indeed; sometimes, just in gabble and rhodomontade, sometimes in a mawkish kind of a sentimental way; and, what I least expected, or desired, he must needs sing me two songs of our own country; in the second of which, "One day I heard Mary say," the tears were running fast down his face, all the time.

At last, he thought proper to acquaint me, that he had lately made an attempt upon his own life; which I did not believe, as it was said in a manner between jest and earnest. But I collected from it, that the idea was no stranger to his mind; and, by soothing him, and 'inquiring, with great kindness and interest, more closely into the state of his affairs, I received the very shocking information, that habitual dram-drinking was not the only vice given in to by that worthless woman, whom he had been so highly delighted, and so proud, to marry. She took her pleasures, it seems, according to her own fancy alone; and knew her way from the Barbican, to the top



of Holborn-hill, as well by night as by day.

Of course, these miseries were soon succeeded by total ruin. The wife died, in a deplorable condition; and there are strong reasons for supposing that James Pattieson would likewise have perished, by his own means, in a gaol, had not I, Jedediah, stepped forward, and extended my arm for his preservation, even as I had before befriended his more respectable father. Reader, I took his stock in trade off his hands; I compounded for his debts; became his sole creditor; and having helped him out to America, had nothing left wherewith to reimburse myself, save the vile trash and trumpery disposed along the shelves of his shop.

Novels and Romances, unreadable and unutterable; the works of authors who write solely for their own diversion; of juvenile authors; of authors unwilling to publish, but encouraged by their friends to

that act of hardihood; first attempts; imitations; and above all, the works of great natural geniuses, unfettered by connexion, probability, common sense, or grammar.

Most of this stuff must now be sold, as mere waste paper. But I have made an effort toward recovering a little of my charges in behalf of that truly unfortunate young man—by retouching a few, curtailing many, newly naming some, and considerably altering others of the stories, which he had collected by the cheapest possible means: at half price; in exchange for other articles; at quarter price; and sometimes, I am almost inclined to believe, at no price whatever.

Those which have been so selected, I shall venture to produce: and have only to add, that, as these tales will be inferior to my former, in all valuable properties, I have been careful, that the present volumes shall not exceed half the number of the others.

But, with a view of preventing misapprehension, it is right also to announce, that this publication neither is, nor, in any respect, is designed to be an imitation, of either series of “ The Tales of My Landlord.”

JEDEDIAH CLEISHBOTHAM.

C O N T E N T S

O F

VOLUME THE FIRST.



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## BUT JUST IN TIME.



A CERTAIN Lady Hughes, whom the people about North Wolmer were in the habit, most impertinently and unbecomingly, of calling Old Lady Hughes, though she was little turned of fifty, had permitted her daughter to ask a particular friend to their house, for an unlimited time. The friend's name was Lucy Ayrton, an uncommonly pretty girl, to be sure, of a lively character; and the friendship between them did credit to Lady Hughes's daughter, who, though well-grown, was pitted with the small-pox, and plain in face—as it tended to prove her free from many petty feminine jealousies.

Lady Hughes, an easy good-humored widow as ever lived, only a little averse to contradiction, in general let these girls go

where they liked, and do very much whatever they pleased; and her ladyship's house being prettily enough situated near the wall of Lord Alfray's famous park, which filled up all the intermediate space between her grounds and the village of North Wolmer; the two friends were apt to make great use of this park, and to walk there, undisturbed, at all hours: sometimes talking upon subjects of the graver order, almost as often upon dress, impending marriages which were certain, impending marriages which were only probable, and the reported fortunes and prospects of sundry dragoon officers, quartered at the neighbouring town of Kingsleate. After an early dinner, on a fine afternoon, towards the end of August 17—, these two girls had sallied forth, in their usual manner, arm in arm, like friends who were more to each other than any sisters could be; and had crossed the whole distance between North Wolmer and the widow's house, a space of more than three

miles, before they at all remembered how far they had got.

“Who could have thought it!” then exclaimed Lucy Ayrton—“Look up! Do you see? The sun is fast declining, and we at the very farthest part of the park from home.”

“Never mind that, my dear,” replied her friend; “my mother will just fret a little as it grows dark; and when we do come in, at last, she will be happier than she was before. What were we talking about? Stay—I know. Now I fairly tell you, that if Bernard Clement was at my feet, as he is at yours, I should be vainer of my conquest than you appear to be, and perhaps conduct myself with less sauciness and imperiousness than you do. Why, he has the good word of your father and mother!”

“He has the good word of every body about us,” said Lucy: “but what would you have? Prudence must be con-



sidered; and he has nothing, and I, not much."

"Do you know," continued Miss Hughes, "I am not at all certain, but that he is the handsomest man whom I ever set eyes on."

"And I, Georgiana, have seldom seen a handsomer."

"Then what would you say, my dear, if he HAD any thing to offer? and I have heard, that there is an uncle somewhere, from whom he has, or had, expectations. Suppose him, therefore, to return to Gilleston, in fair circumstances? Suppose this gentleman-like, agreeable, well-received, amiable man, just in the prime of life, to present himself before you, as I said, in suitable circumstances? What would you think of things?"

Miss Ayrton shook her head.

"This is not quite intelligible to me, "Lucy," said Miss Hughes; "in reality then, you dislike him."

"What matters it whether I like him or

not? You may amuse yourself by imagining this, and that; but that we can never marry, you know, as well as I do."

"Not I, indeed: but I know you, Miss Lucy; and am pretty certain, now, that you have some prejudices against him. Come, I will be answered: has he not the requisites which I just enumerated? Is he not amiable?"

"He has a very gentlemanly manner."

"Is he not generous?"

"So you all say; and so he talks, as if he was."

"That will not do, Lucy."

"I can only say then, that as he is lavish and careless, I presume he is not avaricious. In regard to his generosity, I never heard of his giving much away; and we are all aware, that he has had relations who needed any kind of assistance."

"Perhaps he had nothing to give."

"Perhaps not."

“ Will you not grant me, that he is well received ?”

“ Most particularly ; wherever I have met him : but why is it, that he neither lives, nor ever has lived, on an intimate and friendly footing with any of his own—Georgiana ! I do declare, while we are dawdling on, in this way, the sun has quite gone down, and we shall be benighted. No harm ever happened in this park, I suppose ?”

“ Bless you, No——With his own relations, you were going to say ; but of all that, I know nothing ; except, indeed, that the uncle from whom he expects most, is, according to report, an old humorsome, crusty curmudgeon, who never gives him any help at present,—positively none : and whose temper, they say, is such, that, whether Mr. Clement will eventually succeed to all, or to any of his money, no one can form a guess.

“ I think, my dear,” said Miss Ayrton, that we have had almost enough of Mr.

Bernard Clement, and may as well bring forward somebody else. What o'clock is it, I wonder! I'm afraid your mother will be uneasy—I really am."

"As for that," replied Georgiana, "we shall not be at home the sooner for walking on like two mutes; so I mean to divert myself, and talk away. Did you ever hear of consummate impudence equal to Captain Maclight's presenting himself at Lady Alfray's breakfast! When not one single officer had been invited, and for the best possible reason——"

"Stop," said her friend, "I hear a carriage in the park."

"Lord Alfray's own, I'll be bound," replied Miss Hughes, "going across to the house."

"Nobody else may drive through so late? may they?"

"I fancy not," replied Georgiana Hughes. "I don't know, though—— but none of the officers, you see, had been asked to the breakfast, for the best reason

in the world; because they would not let Lady Alfray have their band." At this instant, they heard a man shout, at a distance; and immediately afterwards, some words were pronounced in a strong, decisive, loud voice, quite a tone of command. Lucy Ayrton stopped; and looked around, somewhat anxiously—"I thought," said she, "I had always been told, that this park was not open to the public."

"Don't loiter," cried her friend; "and don't lean so hard upon me, if you can help it."

"I thought," continued Lucy peevishly. "you had just told me that no carriage could be here, after sun-set, but Lord Alfray's own."

"No, no: I said no such thing—I never meant to say so. There is a public road, I believe, open at all hours, a little beyond that plantation upon your left. Mercy on us! Do get forward, as fast as ever you can."

Before she had done speaking, they

heard a gun or pistol shot: in less than a quarter of a minute, that shot was followed by another; and by a sort of murmuring sound, which the terrified imagination of these girls conceived to be groans.

They ran forward, at the utmost speed they could exert, and never slackened their pace, till they came in sight of the park wall, and of Lady Hughes's house: where they arrived in such a state, that the old lady caught the infection of their fear, and was, for some time, in a more piteous taking than either of them. A circumstance that perhaps saved them from the lecture which, since seven o'clock, she had been putting into shape, and into which, at every succeeding ten minutes of their absence, she had been infusing additionally severe and stinging ingredients.

Adventures, however, were not so frequent at North Wolmer, as that this should lose its appropriate consequences in bustle, clamour, exaggeration, and universal excitement throughout the house. Lady

Hughes had no sooner recovered her first alarm and uneasiness, which were really considerable, than the maid-servants were summoned up stairs, to be frightened, and the men, to be emboldened; the fire-arms were inspected; an old sword, which the late Sir Nahum Hughes had worn when he figured as Major of the —— militia, was brought forth from a lumber closet, and pronounced serviceable; and every thing put in readiness to repel that attack upon the house (it was certainly a lone house,) and massacre of the family, which all seemed to think would, in the progress of the night, be attempted.

After waiting about an hour in this state of preparation, her ladyship, who through the whole of that time had talked without cessation, and had been explaining, by every conceivable supposition, the origin of the young ladies' fright in the park, all on a sudden, changed her ground; and giving up the gang of ruffians whom she had hitherto imagined to be on the point of

besetting her own mansion, declared, that no such thing as a robbery had occurred in that quarter, for many years, and that, from the circumstance of two shots having been heard by the girls, she was positive that some men had been fighting a duel there. Nor would she, as it seemed, have found herself at any loss in pointing out the parties, and probable cause of quarrel, had not her daughter, with sufficient flippancy, interrupted her, by laughing immoderately at the notion of a duel after sun-set.

Upon that point, a controversy arose, which lasted till some trifling article by way of supper was brought in, together with a large glass of something dark and warm, which the old lady said she took medicinally, though it looked exceedingly like mulled port wine. Over this beverage, she continued the dispute; scolded Georgiana for her pertinacity; and admitting just a chance that the firing might not have been produced by a duel; had nevertheless



demonstrated the impossibility of any robbery in that neighbourhood, when a note arrived from the Miss Bowman's, who lived about a mile off, and who, having heard the news, could not, on any account, postpone to the next morning the pleasure of communicating it. This note announced, that a young man, travelling in a post-chaise, whose name the writer understood to be Bannister, or some word of that sound, had been attacked, dangerously wounded, and robbed, in Lord Alfray's park, that evening, by a man well armed, but (as the report went,) on foot.

"There, ma'am!" cried Georgiana Hughes, with an air of triumph, "I said so: just the old sort of highway robbery, you see!"

"I see this, Georgiana," said the old lady, "that if your poor dear departed father had not thought fit to spoil you, but had condescended, now and then, to listen to the advice of others, about the course of your education, a very great deal of con-

ceit might have been rooted out of your disposition, Miss Hughes, which I am now afraid will be a prejudice to you, to your dying day."

More particular advices respecting this alarming event were obtained by our party, in the forenoon of the next day.

In the first place, the name of the young man turned out, not to be Bannister, but Bannatyne—Mr. Charles Bannatyne: and in the second place, the interest just now attached to him was mightily increased, by their discovering him to be the son of a near neighbour of Miss Ayrton's father and mother, who lived at Gilleston, in the county adjoining. Lucy Ayrton, however, had not seen him since she was ten years old; the lad, for the whole of the intervening time, having been at sea; where he had attained the rank of Lieutenant: and in his twenty-second year, his ship being laid up in dock, he was returning to his father at Gilleston, when he met with the mishap just related, in North Wolmer park.

Many gross over-statements, and many total fictions, found their way abroad, concerning this robbery; but these seem to have been the facts which could best be depended upon. The young sailor had between forty and fifty pounds, in money, about him, besides a gold watch, and a miniature picture—the latter, it should be remembered, much less valuable, in reality, than to a common observer, it might appear to be. Of this wealth, he made, as it seemed, a most injudicious display, at the inn where he dined: the house, at that moment, happening to be crowded with company; and the result was, that a tall, and apparently very well-made man, overtook, as he at first supposed, but more probably, way-laid him, in the park; and, with a tone which sufficiently announced his intention, ordered the postillion to stop.

A short parley then took place, according to Mr. Bannatyne's account, in which the highwayman expressed his wishes, and indeed fixed determination, to exact a con-

tribution from the Lieutenant, while the latter declared, as decidedly, his repugnance to the measure. They were both armed; and Bannatyne, finding the assailant firm to his purpose, fired at him with very little ceremony, but unluckily, with as little effect: upon which, the robber made the most of his advantage; returned the fire, wounded him badly in the shoulder, and rushing in, with another loaded pistol, pointed close to the young gentleman's head, compelled him to surrender at discretion, and give up his property.

After the highwayman had taken his departure, which, both Bannatyne and the post-boy asserted, that he did with the utmost composure and audacity, as long, at least, as he could be seen from the chaise, Mr. Bannatyne proceeded, sorely hurt in body, and not particularly elevated in mind, to a small inn, or rather a public-house, in the village of North Wolmer, where he soon made known his misfortune, and sent for medical aid.

An outrage of this nature, which, as old Lady Hughes had truly said, was of rare occurrence in this part of the country, excited much perplexity, speculation, and activity. Some held, that the depredator, from the manner in which he was supposed to have waited for the chaise, and from the time and place of his attack, must have been a person of that neighbourhood.

Others argued, availing themselves of the variety of facts with which the story was adorned, in different companies, that he must certainly have been a stranger.

At last, one David Hoggan was named, as the probable culprit; and the suggestion universally esteemed the happiest that had been made yet. This Hoggan, a country rake and debauchee, a powerful man at all games of strength, and a notorious profligate, was the son of a small farmer, who lived within five miles of the park where this offence had been committed. The father was of little better character than the son; and, in truth, none of the family, the

Miss Hoggans inclusive, enjoyed any very high reputation.

The description also of the robber, given by Mr. Bannatyne, appeared to tally well enough with Davy Hoggan's person; inso-much, that when my Lord Alfray himself, an acting magistrate for the county, granted his warrant for David's apprehension—people were confirmed in their suspicions, on hearing that he was absent from home, having gone up to London, about a fortnight before—as his family were all more ready to swear, than any body else to believe them.

Meanwhile, either the general commiseration which his mischance excited, or the constant inquiries about him, made by every one in the vicinity, from Lord Alfray's circle, to almost its meanest inhabitant, or the particular solicitude of the North Wolmer ladies in his behalf (for we all dearly love to be made much of,) or the skill of the surgeon who attended him, caused the

wound of Lieutenant Bannatyne pretty speedily to assume a favourable appearance.

He wrote, cheeringly, to allay the anxiety of his friends; he promised, with confidence, to be at home by such a day: and now, having procured a remittance, which served to repair his pecuniary losses, he began to walk abroad—an exceedingly pleasant looking young man, by the way, though somewhat pale and worn—and paid visits in all parts of the village, and its environs.

During this period of his convalescence and sojourn at North Wolmer, nobody was more frequently favoured with Mr. Charles Bannatyne's attentions than our friend Lady Hughes: an easy entrée, no doubt, had been procured for him into her house, by the circumstance of his having been an old friend—a former play-fellow indeed—of Miss Ayrton; their fathers' residences in the country (as was before mentioned) being contiguous, and the families always on excellent terms. Aided by such an introduction, the young gentleman found out that

his duty perpetually called him to look in at the widows; and so acceptable did he make his morning visits, that, three or four times, he was invited to dinner, in a family, quiet way; and, despite of remonstrances and protestations, either sent home in the evening, with the pomp and state of an invalid, in her ladyship's carriage, or, under excuse of bad weather, detained at her house through the whole night.

People noticed this intimacy, of course, and were not slack in commenting upon it. "What could Lady Hughes be at?" some said. "Did not she know that the young man had nothing upon earth to look forward to, besides his professional prospects—at least till his father's death; and then, to no very abundant fortune! What was her drift?"

She had none, as others affirmed, besides a pleasure in witnessing the attentions of any man to her daughter, although nothing could possibly come of them. But a third party insisted, that, if any attentions



were paid in that quarter, Miss Hughes was not likely to be their object, as long as she continued guilty of the gross indiscretion of harbouring that very pretty friend.

In the mean time, things went on blithely, at Lady Hughes's: the three women were all vastly taken with the society of the young seaman—and he, with theirs; though we do not mean to say that he was equally delighted with all the party.

But human gratifications must have their ebbs as well as flows. He came in, one morning, with a letter in his hand, which he apprised them, was from his father, and required his return home—not unreasonably either, as he could not but allow, since, for the last ten days, he had been as well able to travel, as any man in the island.

Charles Bannatyne therefore, after expressing his gratitude to Lady Hughes for her many civilities, announced his intention of departing, that same afternoon; in terms, which were not exactly so easy and uncon-

cerned as he meant they should be. But the young man could not get through his short speech, even tolerably.

For several years of his life, he had been unused to female society; and that of the widow Hughes's family had really charmed him, and made him excessively happy: of one of their number, as he often said to himself, he did not know how he could take leave with sufficient calmness: perhaps he had not discovered that he was in love already, over head and ears.

"I won't hear of it: no—you don't mean any such thing"—said the old lady; "do you though, in good earnest? I am sorry; uncommonly sorry: and so we are all, Mr. Bannatyne. I assure you, we shall miss you terribly. However, you'll come to us to-day? You will give us this evening, at all events?"

"You are very good; you are too good, ma'am: but I find my father gets impatient—and, when one must go, you see, ma'am—I'm sure, as for me, if I had

staid here 'till I was willing to go—I might have staid, 'till next Christmas year, or longer. But what must be, must be. Pray remember me most kindly, to Miss Hughes; I'm sorry she isn't here. Good bye, ma'am: thank you for all your goodness to me, a million times. Good bye, Miss Ayrton—God bless you. Is there any thing I can do for you at Gilleston?"

"Yes, indeed, tell my father and mother how comfortable you have left me; and tell your own father, Mr. Charles, how very happy I have been made by this opportunity of renewing our acquaintance."

"So I will," said he, "that is just like your good-nature. I shall be sure to say so—though I know very well, you mean only politeness—and—that kind of thing—yet, I will be sure to tell him so: you may depend upon it."

"And you MUST leave us, this very day?" said Lucy, holding out her hand.

"Why, yes—yes: to-morrow, when the moment come, would be just as bad as

to-day. My stay at Gilleston, Miss Ayrton, will be but short, I fear. Pray, when do you intend to come back!"

"I really cannot say, just now."

"Nay, nay," cried Lady Hughes, "'tis bad enough to lose you, Mr. Bannatyne: do not let us hear of her going, I beseech you."

Charles made his bow, touched Miss Ayrton's hand, with particular caution, not to use the freedom of pressing it too hard—and in evident emotion, left the room.

But whether it happened for his consolation or otherwise, the leave-taking was not all over yet: for before he had proceeded half a mile across the Park, on his way back, he met Georgiana Hughes returning from one of her independent walks, without a servant behind her, or indeed any sort of companion; and she thus addressed him.

"Good day, Mr. Bannatyne. Whatever effects your late misfortune hereabouts may have produced upon the rest of the North Wolmer ladies, you may observe, that it

does not prevent me from walking about, as usual, according to my own pleasure and convenience. But—what's the matter now? I vow, he looks as if he had committed a few robberies himself; and not only that, but had been found out in them.”—Here ensued the counterpart of the explanation which had just been delivered at Lady Hughes's; and which was followed by the same lamentations on the part of Miss Georgiana, and as earnest endeavours to induce him to postpone his departure.

“Well, at any rate,” said she, “you might turn round, and protect me, 'till we come in sight of my mother's house. Whether you set off an hour sooner or later, will signify little, I am confident.”

“Very little,” he replied, “and if you are not frightened out of your solitary rambles; neither will I be deterred from travelling for an hour or two, in the dark. I shall be most happy in the honour of escorting you to the Park gate—but must de-

elare, mind you, against a second formal farewell, up stairs."

" You do not like that ceremony, Mr. Bannatyne."

" Eh—I should be sorry in this instance, not to have bade you all a regular adieu; but I would not choose to repeat it: it is no joke to me, I can promise you. You have thought proper to make yourselves so very agreeable to me, who am unused to be petted, that I am grieved—very much so, too, at the necessity of going away."

" Grieved? upon my word! a strong expression, really! and flattering, to—to—some of us."

" I'll be hanged then, if any other word will do," said the Lieutenant: " I am actually griev'd to leave this place, and that is the fact."

" You are sorry to part from my mother, no doubt; for she is very fond of you; and if there is any dish which you particularly commend at dinner, as you must often have observed—she never fails to have it again

the next time you come: and she plays a respectable hand at whist; not so well, you know, as to entitle her to scold, nor yet so abominably ill, either: and in the interval between the first appearance of the tea, and the settling of the card table, she has such long, placid stories, when one is neither quite asleep, nor quite awake, and does not want to be talking oneself. Besides which, you must likewise be sorry to part with me, Mr. Bannatyne, I should think."

"If you are disposed to be facetious, Miss Hughes, go on, by all manner of means: but I must take the freedom of telling you, that I never remember to have been less in the vein for wit."

"If you like it then, I will be serious," said Georgiana. "I hear a pleasing account of your father, whom you will, doubtless, be delighted to see, after so long an absence. You will also find many other friends and connexions, with whom you have not met since you were a boy. They will all be forward to show you attention; and

why you should not pass your time very happily where you are going, it might be difficult to say.—Still, Mr. Charles Bannatyne, my opinion is, that in the midst of the pleasantest parties which your father can collect for you, you will sometimes wish yourself back at North Wolmer.”

“Of course,” said Charles, colouring up, and not daring to look her in the face. “Of course, I shall: but it doesn’t sound very kind in you, to be reminding one of it.”

“I only think so,” continued Miss Hughes, “because you are about to leave something belonging to you at North Wolmer, which, I suspect, you will miss.”

“Aye! and what may that be?”

“Perhaps, your heart, Mr. Charles.”

“Nonsense!”

“Lucy Ayrton, Mr. Bannatyne, is much admired.”

“She is a very pretty girl,” said he.

They now came to a point where the path turned, which brought them within



view of their walk's end; and Georgiana looking round towards him, with a significant smile, offered to shake hands.

“One moment more, if you please,” he cried, “as you began the subject—”

“What subject?” said she.

“You can hardly suppose me such a blockhead,” he replied, “as not to be aware, that with my small pretensions, and in my situation—prospects uncertain, you see—and having nothing in the world at present—and—there—you understand. You cannot suppose me such an arrant fool, as to imagine that I could permit myself to form notions, or indulge hopes, in regard to any young lady making a part of your mother's family, or who might be on a visit at her house, and—that kind of thing. But, besides, if I did form such hopes: tell me fairly, Miss Hughes, whether there has not been a report of her being affianced, or attached, or somehow or other engaged to a Mr. Bernard Clement? There has, I can

swear: I am sure of it, by your countenance at this moment!"

"Not at all, I do assure you: no report founded in truth, at least. Lucy Ayrton is lively, but not thoughtless; nor is it her way to engage herself in such a hurry. However, I will not say what Mr. Clement may himself wish, or what he may expect: and he, to own the truth, is far from unpopular, among her friends; is personable, insinuating, and persevering; is remarkable for carrying his points—and rather encouraged than otherwise by her parents."

"Why then, have they not married, long ago?"

"For reasons of prudence," said she, laughing; "with all his merit, and all his address, I do not find that he is more prosperous in the world than other people: besides which, with regard to the connexion you speak of, the consent of one party alone is not apt to be sufficient. Cheer you, cheer you, Mr. Charles: faint-heartedness will do

as little in some other pursuits, as in your own profession."

"You design, I see, to go on laughing at me, to the end, Miss Hughes: vastly well; just as you please; every body laughs at us sailors. But, I say—just stop, another quarter of a minute, or less. So, Mr. Clement is a sensible, pleasant-behaved, taking kind of man, hey?"

"No doubt he is: 'twould have been unfair not to apprize you of that; but you must have known him? he is perpetually in your father's neighbourhood; or if you had no great knowledge of him, you must have seen him, at any rate!"

"Never once beheld him, since the day I was born—never once; I give you my word of honour. And now, I must needs confess, that I have no pretence left for keeping you here any longer. Most heartily do I wish you well, and happy, and merry: merry indeed, you will, all three be, at my expense; I can venture to swear that. But if you

think of me in any way whatever, it will be something; and I must content myself."

Here they parted, in the most friendly manner; and Charles Bannatyne arrived at his father's on the evening of the following day. That he should think a good deal of Lucy Ayrton, during his stay at Gilleston, he had always supposed: but never, for many years at least, having been accustomed to a totally idle life—he surely had not anticipated the almost entire dominion which that one subject now usurped over his mind. Instead of contending with, he at first gave way to the impression, in his rides, in his walks, and above all, in his frequent meetings with her parents, who were never tired of talking about their daughter, and from whom he likewise received information respecting another person, which, perhaps, interested more than it gratified him.

But Charles Bannatyne really was a good sort of young man, and, in common conduct, a sensible one; and though he might, occasionally, indulge in reveries and vision-

any ideas, he never failed to recur to the sound conviction, that if he could not cherish reasonable hopes, he must not cherish any. In the sea service, he might rise, to be sure; but that would be a work of time, and the chances of eminent success are against every individual. Meanwhile, he was far from insensible to the general partiality expressed at Gilleston for the man whom he could not but consider as his rival—that is to say, for Mr. Bernard Clement; in whose favour every body spoke, more or less, and none oftener than Mr. and Mrs. Ayrton themselves: in fact, it was clear that he possessed the power of entertaining, or somehow personally pleasing them, to such a degree, that they felt comparatively flat in his absence, and panted for his society again.

In this state of things, Lieutenant Bannatyne laboured to convince himself, that as he had given up every notion of marrying Miss Ayrton, and yet preserved the warmest interest in all that befel her—he

did not know, in truth, whether she could more effectually advance her own happiness, than by preferring so very deserving a person as Clement, whenever prudential motives might sanction such a step: and that, sooner or later; they would certainly marry—he published openly as his opinion, and added, that it was equally his wish.

Charles proved to have been perfectly right, when he said, in taking leave of Lucy Ayrton, that he should probably go to sea again before she returned home. Her journey from North Wolmer was put off from week to week, and at last deferred absolutely till after Christmas: whereas, about the middle of December, our honest and gallant Lieutenant got an appointment to another ship, which he was ordered to join immediately, and not without some hopes held out of promotion. Charles had every thing in readiness, upon extremely short warning; like a youth of zeal, vigour, and good heart in his business: and in the course of a round of final visits paid on the

day previous to his departure from Gilleston, he called at the parsonage, and found Mr. Vowles at home.

Mr. Vowles was a very young man, and, if now in existence, it may be hoped is a serious clergyman; though that could hardly be affirmed of him, with justice, at the period of which we speak. In order to avoid what he dreaded beyond any other imaginable disgrace—the being considered a priggish parson—he judged it fitting at that time, not only to conduct himself like an ordinary man, but rather outrageously as a man of the world.

“Holla—Bannatyne!” he exclaimed—  
“glad to see you: less so, on a farewell visit, than any other; but glad to see you, any how. Take a chair, my young hero. I have been hard at work, sir—passing my time uncommonly well this morning: I’ve no idea of throwing away time; you never catch me at that folly. So, as I could not hunt, thanks to that stupid, awkward, tailor of a fellow who threw down my mare, I

have been at it, tooth and nail, my boy! Look ye there," pointing to a Greek folio, in which he certainly had been reading, for some hours: indeed, he left the university with no inconsiderable reputation as a scholar.

"Snug, Charles!" continued the vicar, "this study of mine; and not so badly fitted up, either. I call it a study—modest, you know—unpretending—meaning every body else to call it a library—take that with you! But what has become of your taste and observation? You no more notice one's new furniture, than if you had never been in the house before."

"Egad—you're so comfortable throughout, that I don't know what to begin with admiring. There's many and many a squire's house in the county, inferior to this parsonage. Capital dining room, too—only wants a lady at the head of the table. I wonder you don't marry, Mr. Vowles."

"Oh, time enough to think of wedlock. Not that I have forsworn the state, sir: a



man in my predicament should marry—'tis the more creditable situation. But after all, what choice have I? living here, tied, as it were, by the leg, and confined to one particular set of people?"

"Well then, take our neighbourhood, and go over them, now."

"Who is there that one could think of? I put the question to you fairly:—Aye, aye, I know full well upon whom you are about to run off—Lucy Ayrton, of course; and a sweet girl she is, without dispute. I am not so fastidious as all that comes to; but I spend my whole income already; aye, more than the whole, I am afraid: and if you, my jovial tar, my noble son of Ocean, will be kind enough to tell me how my debts are to be paid, and a family maintained, upon an additional five thousand pounds, perhaps, some day or other, after old Ayrton's death, who, all the while, may be as good a life as oneself—I shall feel greatly obliged to you."

There were passages in this discourse,

that made Charles Bannatyne's blood curdle within him; but he whistled it off, and renewed the conversation, instead of throwing a huge volume of one of the fathers at the minister's head, which he was strongly tempted to do.

"As to Miss Ayrton," he replied, "I undoubtedly had no intention of recommending her to your notice, for this simple reason—that many say, her affections are even now engaged, if not her very word and promise."

"Indeed! and who's the happy man?"

"Nay, it would be the height of impertinence in me to repeat all the gabble circulated about a village like this; and I request you to observe, that I assert nothing as of my own knowledge."

"To be sure; to be sure not: but who is the happy man though? You don't mean Bernard Clement?"

"Faith, but I do; and see nothing out of the way in the supposition. Why, is he not very fond of her?"

“Desperately in love—distractedly; but it will never be brought to bear.”

“You seem in the secret, Mr. Vowles! Do you know much of that gentleman?”

“Do you know much of any of your own shipmates, Charles! Clement and I were at school together; at college together; yes, and a great deal in this very village together.”

“What brought him here, at first? any original friends or connexions?”

“No connexions; but Clement soon makes friends. If you ask, however, what brought him to Gilleston—it was the girl we have been talking of. Where he first became acquainted with her, I forget; though I have been told nine hundred times—in the Isle of Wight, or somewhere.”

“Is he clever, Mr. Vowles?”

“He—m:—sharp-ish, by nature; but very ignorant.”

“He is a pleasant man though.”

“Yes, he is.”

“And of good moral character?”

“ My gallant admiral—as I heartily hope I shall live to see you—moral character is a matter very little inquired about, in these days: which, by the bye, is deeply to be lamented; nobody regrets it more than myself, I assure you. And, whatever one may say here, I am particularly careful, in the pulpit, to mark that sign of the times with its due reprehension. But now, if you are talking of Mr. Clement’s morality, I will just let you into the truth. No man with whom I have ever lived, and I have seen a great deal of life, considering my age, can make himself more acceptable, for a time, than Bernard Clement: but he has such loose ideas upon many subjects, that, on some occasions, he has even endangered his reception among common worldly society. For instance; he’ll lose small bets, and forget all about them; at the university, he would lose money at tennis, and never think of paying: he will borrow things from a person, a gun, or a fishing rod, or any thing—[he served me so, not six

months ago, with regard to a devilish nice pair of pistols] and mislay them; for I really do suppose that they are always *bond fide* lost. Then, if you ask him for them again, oh! you have a profusion of apologies, in his light, easy way, for his folly and heedlessness, with a ready offer to repay you for the article, at its prime cost: which would all be pretty well, only the deuce a bit do you ever see your money! However, to come back to our first subject. You may take my word for it, that he will no more marry Lucy Ayrton, than you'll marry one of the princesses. He lives here, to be sure, in a quiet lodging, dining out every day, and at no expense upon earth: but Clement, sir, is a needy man; at times, and in London, he has been a distressed one; and this information you may rely upon, Charles; for, as I said before, he is my very peculiar friend."

"Humph!" cried young Bannatyne: "then, as he belongs to no regular profes-

sion, who can say how his affairs are ever likely to mend?"

"Not I, for one," replied the divine; "though he is not so totally without expectations. There's a brother of his late mother, one Minchin, I think, an East-Indian, whose favourite Bernard certainly was, in his earliest youth; and, I believe, the old buck maintained him at college: but, that he has since utterly thrown him off, I know for a fact. Still, if this Mr. Minchin, or whatever he calls himself, should relent, and once more admit him to any kind of familiarity, much may be done by the shrewdness, address, favourable deportment, and tongue of my friend Bernard Clement."

"By 'Jove in his chair,' Mr. Vowles!" cried the Lieutenant, looking at his watch, "I ought to have been at home just two and thirty minutes ago. But when one once begins listening to you——"

"Nay," said the vicar, "'twas you who

were the life of the conversation; I am sure you yourself were the——”

“ When one,” resumed Charles Bannatyne, breaking in upon his sentence, “ once fairly gets into that arm-chair, there is no probability—— I swear, the half-hours go like minutes, and the hours——”

“ Ah, you rogue, you’re growing complimentary,” said the parson. “ But, fare ye well; and success to you, and glory, and promotion, and prize mo——” By this time, however, the other was out of hearing.

After many excuses to her own friends, for delay, many solicitations from those with whom she was staying, to prolong her visit, and much lamenting at her departure, Miss Ayrton, at length, prepared to leave Lady Hughes’s hospitable mansion, about the middle of January. She had, indeed, at one time shown something a little like impatience to be gone; but that was before Christmas: and on being afterwards informed that young Bannatyne had quitted

Gilleston (so, at least, Georgiana Hughes always declared) she made up her mind, with perfect philosophy, to remain a little longer at North Wolmer.

At last, however, a steady old servant of her father, seated on the box of nearly as old a chariot, which, originally, they say, had been purchased at second hand—did actually come to 'fetch away Miss Lucy: and with a profusion of kisses, embraces, aye—even tears, and injunctions to correspond fully, delightfully, eternally, by every practicable means, public and private—the Hughes's permitted her to depart in peace.

The journey to Gilleston was too long to be conveniently achieved in one day; it was, therefore, settled, that she should sleep at Loxley-cum-Wotton: the Angel inn there being a good clean house, and kept by people who had known her family since the year 1768.

But, although the fair Lucy met with a cap-in-hand reception from the landlord, and the most obsequious smiles and curtsies



of his wife, they could not but lament, that it was market day, and their house so full, that they feared they might not be able to accommodate Miss Ayrton with a suitable room. Lucy, however, was not particular about her room, so that she could be secure from disturbance; and, towards nine o'clock at night, had taken out her desk, with a view of losing no time in the commencement of this famous correspondence—when her door burst open, and in bolted two old farmer-like looking men, in great coats as tough as unwrought bull's hides, with red handkerchiefs round their necks, hats fast upon their heads, and immense horsewhips in their hands. They stared at Lucy, and she at them.

“We be all wrong, Jan,” said one of them: “Beg pardon, Miss.”

“Beg ye pardon, Miss,” said the other: and those two retreated.

Lucy hoped that no similar interruption was likely to occur; and had once more prepared herself to write, when a younger

man, in new boots, and a coat of a light mixture, with buttons as big as a crown-piece, apparently of the same order of society as the two former—made exactly the same intrusion. He walked, with eyes blinking at the light, straight up towards the table; stood there, for a second, or more; and then bowing almost to the ground, with a long scrape of one foot behind him, muttered some words which he intended for apology, and was withdrawing—but he dropped, or pretended to drop, something upon the carpet, which gave him a pretence for turning round, and taking another full survey of Miss Ayrton, before he left the room. Immediately after this second invasion, she clearly heard the following brief dialogue, from the passage without.

“How say’st, Dick? Be thy uncle right, or wrong?”

“Right, man, right; as ever old fellow wor’—I’ve come little better than ten miles to-day; but a man might go twice ten-

hundred, and not see such another dainty lass as that !”

Miss Lucy now thought it quite time to make some representations to the people of the inn, and was rising to ring the bell. At that instant, however, she heard a loud shriek, followed by some such noise, as if Lady Hughes’s whole collection of china had been thrown out of window. She rang away, therefore, with the more vehemence, and a little boy only answering the bell : she desired him to send up, forthwith, either the woman of the house, or the old servant who had arrived there with her. The latter duly and speedily appeared ; and in answer to Miss Ayrton’s complaints and inquiries — “ Why, madam,” said he, “ it’s a busy time with them, you see, these market-days. Mrs. Dawson ’s terribly vexed at it ; so’s Dawson too ; but they can’t help themselves no-how. I was afeard you’d be frightened at the smash—though there’s nothing happened, to sinnify ; only a bit of a toozle—Hallet and Sam Nicholls. Samuel, he lays

his great-coat across the bar, you see ; and the t'other (Hallet) puts rummers and things upon't ; and Sam, he charges him with spilling o' liquor over it: so away snatches he the coat, and pulley-haulley, they go to work ; for which, I reckon, one or t'other of 'em will have a pretty penny to pay."

Such, however, was the uproar in the house for more than an hour and half after this, that it required all Miss Ayrton's fortitude to venture up stairs to her chamber, although accompanied by the maid.

When she had performed that feat, she locked and bolted her door, went to bed, and lay long awake, listening to the terrific sounds of clamour and quarrelling from below ; sounds, which, though her distance from them preserved her from distinctly hearing much coarse, and unseemly controversy, appeared, from the very circumstance of that distance, more alarming to her imagination. And when, at last, all became still, and the whole house was wrapt in

silence, the sudden transition excited her suspicions ; nor, in that state of quiet, did she get to sleep so soon as she ought to have done, and would have done, had she known that the farmers, one and all, were just then making the best of their way homeward.

In the course of the next day's journey, Miss Ayrton had only to change horses once, at the Hen-and-chickens, at Ellesley : from whence, to her father's house, was an easy stage, of about eleven miles and a half, in truth—though the roads in that part of the country seem not to have been measured with very scrupulous accuracy ; for the people at the Hen always charged thirteen miles.

While the horses were putting to, she was shown into a little parlour: the day was bitter cold ; the fire very bad ; and the waiter, by over-loading it with small coal, had made it worse. Lucy, therefore, turned to the window, in preference to standing before the grate ; and from thence beheld

two smartly dressed men talking to old Joe Foster, her father's servant, and her own escort.

Miss Ayrton was of a cheerful disposition; had been a good deal used to admiration, moreover, and did not particularly dislike it; so that, although she was far enough from being too deeply interested about that Mr. Clement, of whom we have heard so much; it would be rash to say, that a pleasurable sensation might not, in some degree, have passed over her mind, when she perceived the taller of these men to be no other than that gentleman himself. —Because she suspected, and with good reason, that he thought more of her than of any female living; that he admired, and in all probability, doated upon her.

When she came out to the chaise, Mr. Clement greeted her with common remarks and inquiries, more tenderly expressed, however, than perhaps is usual, and handed her into the carriage; in which situation,

notwithstanding the cold, she stopped for a few minutes, solely to talk with him.

“ I presume then,” said she, “ that you mean to occupy your former lodging at Gilleston ?”

“ Unless you should forbid me, Miss Ayrton.”

“ Nay, I have no right to forbid you, were I ever so much disposed to do it : but the truth is, we shall all be pleased to see you.”

“ Should Mr. and Mrs. Ayrton,” said he, “ indulge and honour me with the same familiarity as formerly, your never-failing spirits will tend, beyond any other charm that I can imagine, to draw me from myself, and my own distresses.”

“ Hey-day ! distresses ! and in such a tragical tone too.”

“ Pardon me,” he replied, with a faint laugh, “ I entertain no design, believe me, of being melancholy and sentimental when I come to Gilleston : but in sober earnest, Miss Ayrton,—the unforgiving tenacity of

one relation, the parsimony of another, the treachery of some more, and, alas!—hope long deferred—might have justified me, and many a man, in appearing a little out of sorts. I, however, must be sick at heart, indeed, before my friends shall find me querulous.”

“Do you think this frost will continue?” said Lucy.

“I hope not,” he, somewhat shortly, replied.

“Now, do you know,” said she, “that rather hope it may.”

“If you wish for a hard frost, Miss Ayrton—be it so, in spite of every calamity that may follow: otherwise, when one thinks of the lower orders——”

“True,” said she: “what you suggest is very true. One does so continually detect oneself in a selfish want of consideration——but you are coming on to Gilleston now, are you not? You will be there this afternoon, I conclude!”



“Not till to-morrow morning. This gentleman”—pointing to his young companion, who stood near them, “has been so kind as to wander more than twenty miles out of his way, in order to accompany me hither: and of course, I am bound to give him the whole of this evening, before we part. Mr. Wilcox—Miss Ayrton!”

Lucy took a glimpse of the friend, but not much liking his cast of countenance, she bowed coolly, and ordered her chaise to proceed.

There was no great harm about Mr. Wilcox, however, although Miss Lucy might not particularly admire his physiognomy: he was a careless, good-humoured, obliging young man, not eminent in capacity, but possessed of a fine estate—though somewhat out of ~~cash~~ at present, in consequence of the life he had been leading in London, where he had the ill-luck to fall into a debauched, and very expensive set. Among that class of people, he once or twice, however (and pretty early after his joining

them), had met a man so incontestibly superior, in conversation, manners, and the principles which he professed, to the others around them, that young Wilcox became completely captivated by him ; and the favourable impression was completed, when Mr. Bernard Clement—for he it certainly was—gave him such friendly and valuable hints on the characters of several of them, as proved of essential service to him ; and, though he had already incurred some mischief, kept him out of more. Wilcox, upon this, cultivated an intimacy with Mr. Clement ; nor did he cultivate it in vain. They, latterly, had a great deal of confidential intercourse ; and Clement not only put him in the way of seeing every body, and every thing that was best worth seeing in London (for it so happened, that, until he came of age, this young man had never been there, since he was capable of remembering much about the place), but also introduced him to some exceedingly pleasant acquaintance ; and Mr. Wilcox conceived

his time to have been far more rationally as well as agreeably spent, in consequence of his forming this alliance with Bernard Clement.

How they subsequently left town together, and how they had travelled together as far as the Hen-and-chickens at Ellesley, has just been related. Here they passed the evening, in discourse chiefly; which Mr. Clement, though not in first-rate spirits, enlivened by anecdote, and extensive knowledge of what was going on in the world, and rendered interesting, by acute observations, short, well-expressed, and sometimes original. Nor, although he was the principal talker, did he appear to be much gratified, in point of vanity, by that circumstance; on the contrary, he was the first to tire of conversation, and inquired, as the night advanced, whether they had a backgammon board in the house. But his companion differed, in this case, from his usual habits; and, for some reason or other, manifested a disinclination to that diversion.

Bernard, therefore, in his never-failing, gracious, and accommodating manner, readily waved the proposal. Once or twice they spoke of Miss Ayrton; the subject being always introduced by Wilcox, who had been much struck with her appearance; but he soon perceived that it would not do; that, in spite of affected carelessness, it visibly affected his friend; and he consequently desisted, concluding that Clement was seriously attached to her. They had taken leave of each other, after breakfast, next morning—had said all that was to be said about hopes of meeting again—had paid their joint bill, and were about to proceed to their separate destinations, when the landlord came into the room; and with humble excuses to Mr. Clement, for mentioning what he was sure the gentleman had quite forgotten, begged to remind him of the four or five days during which he had taken up his quarters at that house, nearly a year ago; and presented a bill for the same, of three pounds seventeen shillings.

Bernard looked at the bill, and, for a moment, fretted: but his countenance immediately cleared up, and in his mildest tone, he made some few objections to its amount. To these, the landlord civilly replied, that on, at least, two of the days, his honour had entertained a friend at dinner; that the money had been due very nearly a twelvemonth; and he hoped the charge would not be objected to—for that he really was in great distress: one of his principal debtors had lately failed; he had a large family; a sick wife; and his second son was so incurably a cripple, that he seemed likely to be a heavy burthen on them, as long as he lived.—Here, Mr. Wilcox, heartily and honestly, though perhaps not very consistently with good breeding, joined in, and declared in favour of the reasonableness of the charge.

“To be sure, then,” cried Mr. Clement, “there is no more to be said. The whole thing had gone out of my head, really; but this is exactly the sort of case, when one

feels obliged, and glad to be reminded of a debt. At present Mr. Peters—— Peters is your name, I think?"

" Paterson, sir," said the landlord.

" Paterson, I mean. Well, just at present, Mr. Paterson, I am on my way to Gilleston, where I intend to pass some weeks; and shall take care to send you over your money, before I leave that place."

Poor Paterson bowed, and went out, without saying another word.

" Now, upon my soul, Clement," cried Wilcox—" Beg you a thousand pardons, though, for interfering in your concerns—but I wonder you didn't pay the fellow off, upon the spot. What can such a sum as that signify to you?—and, to him, I'll be shot if I don't believe 'twould be of material consequence. All that account about his sick family, and so forth—hurts one, rather than otherwise—hang me, if it doesn't: and it touch'd you too; I saw plainly enough. Poor fellow! his story came out naturally, without cant, or contrivance——"

“ You give me credit,” said Clement laughing, “ for full as much sensibility, in this instance, as I possess. That Master Paterson got through his story tolerably well—I agree with you ; but it affected me the less, because I never yet was dunned, in my life, without some such history ; and of this, I have not the honour of giving credence to one word.—However, as you have pronounced in support of his charge—the debt must be a good one—and so, I consider it ; and my simple reason for not paying him directly, is, that I have not the money about me.”

“ Well, well,” replied young Wilcox, feeling in his pocket, “ you know more of the world than I do : but, by Heavens, sir ! to me, there was so much the air of honest truth about what the man said ; that, if you will give me leave—Hold up, for a moment though—I must see first, that I have enough left, to carry me home afterwards—Aye, it will do, I fancy—If you’ll allow me, I say, to advance these few pounds for

you—only a small addition to the trifle you owe me already—upon my life, I shall have considerable satisfaction in seeing old Paterson's phiz brighten up, before I leave his house, which I may never again come within forty miles of."

"My dear fellow, just as you please," said Mr. Bernard Clement: "I admire your good-nature; I do indeed. 'Tis precisely what I should have done, myself, at your age—Aye, and what I should be very apt to do, still. Pay him then, if you like; re-imburse him, by all means: for my part, I'd as lief you were my creditor, as mine host of the Hen-and-chickens."

Accordingly, Paterson, being recalled, pocketed his money, to his great convenience, and gratification; a receipt for which, was, with a grand appearance of negligence in such matters, declined by Mr. Clement. And the two friends set out upon their different routes, leaving both landlord and landlady as well pleased with them, as they were with each other.



Bernard Clement soon established himself in his former quarters at the village of Gilleston, where he seemed to have lost no popularity by his absence. The first family with which he dined, was that of Sir James Roberts, a gentleman of large fortune; and at his house he met, among several others—Mr. Bannatyne, the father of our young seaman. Here, he heard the merits of Lieutenant Bannatyne so generally and warmly discussed, that, though he had, at first, lent but a cold ear to the discourse, he began, before the day was over, to feel very considerably interested in it; and to ask himself the question, whether Mr. Charles Bannatyne might not have recommended himself to more individuals in that neighbourhood, than those who constituted the present company.

This suspicion once infused into his mind, there was no end to his inquiries about Charles—about his figure, his habits, his talents, his services, his connexions, and every thing belonging to him. And not

only on the day of Sir James Roberts's dinner party, but to every body almost who lived thereabouts, were such questions perpetually addressed—with exception of one person. When in company with Miss Ayrton, he neither suffered himself to mention the Lieutenant, nor took part in the conversation, if he was mentioned by any body else.

Lucy indeed, who was under no such guard, manifested little disposition to avoid the subject; and, with her customary frankness, expressed such an opinion of the young sailor, as induced Mr. Bernard Clement to wish him all imaginable prosperity in his profession, consistent with the impossibility of his coming back, for many years, to reside at Gilleston.

Meanwhile, Bernard discovered, that the duties of an idle man without fortune, who means to keep up his consequence in any sort of society, are neither few, nor easy. He had to pay assiduous attention to all the dull people in that part of the

country, who, as sometimes happens in other parts, far out-numbered the agreeable: he had to accept all invitations; for if any families whatever were to be disgusted, and to quarrel with him—the circumstance of his being totally dropped, by however few, might have made a bad precedent. He was moreover obliged, in whatever state of spirits, to be the life of the party, as often as he did go out—and for frequent depression of spirits, which, by nature, were eminently gay, and in general triumphant—he had but too much reason.

Nobody could assume the air or tone of a man of the world, better than Bernard—though, in truth, he had not enough of that character about him: he had commenced flirting with Lucy Ayrton, merely as an amusement; and for some time, his care was, so to manage matters, as to divert, without committing himself. But his passions were strong; a great deal too strong for the projects he had formed, and the life

he purposed to lead; and he was now in love with her, to a degree that occupied all his thoughts, and (with the aid of apparently hopeless poverty) embittered all his days.

Such, however, was his art, or resolution, or both, that he smothered his disquietude pretty effectually; and it is thought, that, at this period, it was suspected by only one, or, at the utmost, two of his acquaintance.

But as violent and corroding passion can rarely be concealed from the object of it—in spite of gaiety, jesting, conviviality, and volubility—for he often figured as a debater too, and harangued with plausibility, if not soundness, upon subjects of every description—Lucy Ayrton discovered more of the true state of his mind, at this visit to Gilleston, than she had ever done before; and although flattered, was far from overjoyed at the discovery. Her parents also saw, and saw with pride and pleasure, how highly he admired her; but as, in the pre-

sent juncture, any thing beyond admiration would have been inconvenient—her father, a jolly, hospitable, hard drinking squire, concluded that his friend Clement knew his place, and would sue for nothing which was absurd and extravagant :—while his wife, a dawdle of the romantic cast, and herself much more in love with the young man than her daughter was, admitted she knew not what vague hopes, that, some day or other, his inclinations, which she chose to encourage, might be gratified, with prudence.

Mr. Clement had now been at Gilleston for more than a month : and one day, while sitting, after dinner, with the Ayrton family, he complained, that, although his affairs imperiously called him elsewhere—he could not prevail upon himself to leave the place. At this, old Mr. Ayrton, with a horse-laugh, called him an indolent dog ; and said, he was so spoilt by all the women, young, old, and middle-aged, about Gilleston, that he would never be fit to undertake any steady

business, either for himself, or any body else.

Mrs. Ayrton, however, observed, that, for her part, unless this business was of more importance than the engagements of young gentlemen in general; she could not see, why Mr. Clement was to hurry away from a neighbourhood, where every body liked him, and he liked every body.

Bernard bowed; and before the grateful smile was off his countenance, looked towards Lucy, who said not one word.

The vicinity of Gilleston being very thickly inhabited, their party was much increased, in the evening: two or three card tables were filled, and the young ladies of accomplishment—that is, all the young ladies,—placed, in succession, at the piano-forte.

While Miss Ayrton performed, Clement “hung over her enamoured;” and so little controlled his feelings, that, in considerable annoyance, she abandoned her place as soon as she could; and retiring

to a table in one corner of the room, began to inspect a book which lay before her, containing coloured plates of Swiss and Tyrolese peasants, and those sort of people.

At this employment she continued without interruption, till, under favour of a double lesson executed by two of Mrs. Progwell's nieces, accompanied on the flute by Mr. Vowles, the clergyman of the parish (a gentleman with whom we have been in company before),—Bernard slipped away from the instrument, and drew a chair close to the table where Lucy was seated.

“ You were in haste, Miss Ayrton, to retreat from the piano-forte.”

“ If I had not been, I should have behaved very improperly. Others were to show off, you know, as well as myself, especially at my own father's house.”

“ Well-bred and considerate, no doubt,” said Clement. “ You are unambitious in society, as I have often remarked—and unsolicitous for admiration, either general

or—(with a sigh)—particular. But may I ask, whether you have given me all your reasons for ceasing to play, so very—very soon?”

“I am not clear, Mr Clement, that you have a right to inquire. Any single good reason ought to be sufficient.”

“I cannot help suspecting that somebody was troublesome to you.”

“If you put questions to me,” replied Lucy, endeavouring to laugh off this conversation, “I must tell you the truth, however horrible.”

“I am an unhappy man,” said he, with an alteration of manner to gravity, not to say melancholy; “and can hardly suppose that any one ever laboured under such untoward and accursed circumstances before. My early prospects are irreparably overthrown; and in consequence merely of a few of those trivial, venial errors, which ninety young men out of the hundred—all those, that is to say, who, with warm hearts, have a quick perception of



enjoyment—invariably give in to; and, commonly speaking, without material detriment to their views in life, or even so much as serious reproach at the time. For my misfortunes, rather than my misdeeds, for a few follies, rather than faults, I am abandoned to ruin. That is a strong expression; but, in fact, I have been abandoned to many severer hardships, aye, and to more real misery too, than people here would suspect—by a relation, who originally deceived me into hopes of succeeding to wealth and ease. Under advantage of which prejudice against me—my brother Matthew—I am sorry to say it—However, no degree of bad usage, cunning, and circumvention, shall induce me to speak ill of those whom I fain would esteem, and whom I never can cease to love, let them injure me as they may.”

“Mr. Clement,” replied Miss Ayrton, “we have long been good friends. My father and mother entertain a particular regard for you—and, believe me, I regret

to hear what you have just been saying: but, let me entreat you, to talk to me no more in this strain.—You become agitated as you go on, to a degree of which you are not aware; and if other people's attention is not already drawn towards us, I am confident it soon will be, should you persist in complaining so strangely to me, of what can be no concern of mine."

"Bear with me," he cried, "for one instant only. Bred to the expectation of a large fortune, I have never engaged, or only nominally engaged, in any profession by which a man might advance himself: and now, blasted in hope, and nearly twenty-eight years of age—I am called upon to begin the world anew. But still, I trust, I could have summoned energy, spirit, and perseverance enough to have made all requisite exertions, had not a resistless, and I must add, an ill-requited attachment, confined me to this spot; paralyzed my efforts; and instead of——"

"Holla, Clement!" cried old Mr.

Ayrton, from the card table, "what the devil's going forward there? By George, they've got acting plays, I believe. Why d'ye sit so, stuck upright in your chair? That's never the way! Down with you, man; down upon one knee, to be sure: Come, what is it? Romeo, or Belvidera, or what?"

"I told you t'would be so," said Lucy softly; and availing herself of the universal laughter which followed her father's wit, she escaped from her lover, and took refuge in the very heart of the circle.

Mr. Clement went home that night, cheered by no over-delicious train of reflections; and lay awake for many hours, meditating, in good earnest, upon what he had often talked, but never seriously thought of. He pondered in earnest upon the duty of leaving Gilleston for ever; of giving up all idea of Lucy Ayrton, as a mere visionary pursuit; and of entering, late as it was, into the army, and getting free, by manly effort, from many idle and

unprofitable habits, in which he had too long indulged. But, somehow or other, next day, when he went out on a round of visits, in order to ascertain whether any impression had been made upon others, by the impassioned scene between Miss Ayrton and himself, which the old gentleman, her father, had brought into public notice, by laughing at them—and to obviate it, if any such impression there was—he succeeded so happily, and ridiculed himself, Squire Ayrton, even Miss Lucy, and some more of the party, with such effect, that he again took heart; dismissed for the present his more worthy determinations; thought of Lucy with renewed rapture; hoped that something would turn out in his favour; and loitered on at Gilleston, for nearly two months longer.

The spring had now made some advances; and Mr. Vowles, the vicar of the parish, who prided himself upon a better laid-out flower-garden than any of the neighbouring squires could boast, was ex-

amining his daffodils and tree-pæonys one morning, when he observed Mr. Bernard Clement enter the garden, at the further end from the spot where he stood, and walk straight towards the house. A prodigious intimacy had long been kept up between these two fellow-collegians, though, of late, it might have appeared to be somewhat in the wane. But the stand-off, if there was one, seemed rather attributable to the clergyman than to the other; for about this time, he found Mr. Clement too frequently in his way; and was disgusted at the popularity, and constant success in company, of one, whom he held, beyond all imagination, cheap, as a man of information: neither did he see, in the least degree, why, as a mere pleasant lively member of society, Bernard was to be preferred to himself.

The first impulse of Mr. Vowles, therefore, upon this visit, was to retire behind one of his own hedges, till the storm had passed over. But he could not get away

in time; and when he perceived that his retreat was impracticable, and that Clement must inevitably see him as he approached the house, the divine came forward to receive him, with all proper cordiality of address.

"How does your garden thrive, Vowles?" said the visitor: "things will be late this season, won't they?"

"Rather so; but hadn't you better walk in?"

"As you like; at any rate, I shall not detain you long. I am not come here to pay formal attentions to you, as you may easily conceive—only to ask a favour of you."

This piece of information fell heavy upon the parson's ear; and its effect might have been perceptible, in a screw of displeasure that contorted his whole face, but particularly the left corner of his mouth, which opened with a shuddering twitch, and displayed, for a moment, both his teeth and gums.

Mr. Clement, however, either did not, or pretended not to perceive this; and preceded him into the parlour, where, without the slightest aid or encouragement from the reverend gentleman, he drew forward the most luxurious of his chairs, and seated himself therein.

Clement stole a glance, every now and then, at his friend's most unpropitious countenance; but, instead of being disheartened by his sour aspect, he seemed to have more than half a mind to laugh—and at all events, to feel, most peculiarly, at his ease. Not so the vicar, who sat bolt upright, starch, and prim; and contemplated his old school-fellow, with lips firmly compressed together.

“From an old friend like you, Vowles,” said Mr. Bernard Clement, “I have never attempted to conceal my motive for coming so frequently to this stupidest of all stupid places, Gilleston. A place which, *à priori*, a man might safely swear, would suit my habits less than any other given

village in England. 'Tis that girl, Sir! It may be romance—it may be folly—it may be madness; but let it be whatever it will, and let the consequences be whatever they may, I cannot live without her; that's the fact. By all that's great and glorious, my little bishop—if she would have risked the step, I'd have married her any day within the last three years, upon a hundred and fifty pounds a year—or what we could raise—and have run all the hazards of the world with her!"

"You would, would you?" returned Mr. Vowles drily; "but there were two opinions, I conjecture, upon that subject. And besides—allow me to inquire, what business all this is of mine?"

"Business! O, just the interest that one friend takes in the comfort of another: and as you have often joked with me, and laughed at me, about this affair—I shall expect you, if necessary, to be grave also: I shall expect effectual assistance from you, Vowles, if matters should take



such a turn as to make me require it. However, don't look as if you were just going to gulp down a great dose of physic. What I mean to ask of you now, is a perfect nothing. I have been here, you see, for five weeks and upwards; have spent all my money; and you must lend me ten pounds to take me to town."

"And, by——" began the divinè, but stopped, as he was willing to suppose, in time—"Upon my life, sir, I must assure you, once for all, that a number of trifling sums, as you call them, may amount to an important debt; and before I lend you any more money—I shall be glad to hear something of from fifteen to twenty pounds borrowed of me already, upon different occasions, as well as the price of a handsome pair of pistols, which you had of me last August, and which you have never thought fit to return."

"My dear Vowles," replied Mr. Clement, with perfect calmness, "the circumstance of your having obliged me in this

way before, is the very reason why I apply to you now. But if 'tis inconvenient for you to spare the money, there are plenty of other people who will be ready to accommodate me. My chances—by heaven, sir! are brightening; and I must do my brother Matthew—whom I suspected of having injured me in our uncle Minchin's opinion—the justice to admit, that he has dealt honourably and kindly by me at last; and has actually persuaded the old gen'man to see me. Wherefore, as he consenteth to an interview, I hold myself not far removed from security. That mine uncle is not long for this world, I hear from all quarters; and, should he once let his old favourite get about him again—Aha! the business is done, my little Polycarp. If I then miss the succession to his dirty pelf, or the greater part of it, you shall have my free leave to arrest me for what I owe you already, as well as to call me an ass, whenever, and wherever, you meet me."

“How you do keep rattling on,” said the vicar, taking out his keys and applying them forthwith to his desk: “if you would but have suffered me to finish my observations; you would have found, that, although I judged it as well just to put you in mind of these little out-standing matters, (which, indeed, had I been in your place, and you in mine, I should, myself, have chosen to be apprized of) I never had the most distant idea of refusing you the ten pounds. No, no, Clement: Here’s your money—Here are a couple of greasy fives, as fine as butterfly’s wings; but they’ll hold together till you change them—I will answer for that.”

“Country notes, I see,” observed Clement.

“I know they are: but payable in London, both of them. Pooh, they will go all along this line of road. Be off with you, then; you have no time to lose, I guess.”

“Not a moment,” said Mr. Clement.

"Is the old fellow so very bad, though?"

"Devilish bad, they tell me."

"Mind your hits, Bernard. Ha, ha; —I say, Bernard, persuade him to leave me something, will you? Ha, ha, ha! Good luck to you."

"I will. I will. Ha, ha, ha! Good day, Vowles—and thank you, kindly."

Mr. Clement, as we have seen, had expressed the most confident and consolatory hopes with regard to his chance of reinstating himself in his uncle's good graces: but not more confidence, it would seem, than the event appeared pretty certain to justify him in.

He found the old gentleman alive, and, what is called, sensible; but so far weakened in understanding and memory, that all impressions unfavourable to his elder nephew had, in great measure, faded from his mind; while, on the other hand, he was reminded, in Bernard's countenance and tone of voice, of the child on whom he had once doted beyond any human

being; and soon recovered so much of his former fondness, that he would scarcely suffer him to be, for an hour together, out of his sight.

Such was the state of things all through the following summer, autumn, and winter: the good folks at Gilleston expecting, from week to week, the news of Mr. Minchin's decease, and absolutely bursting with curiosity, to know how he would dispose of his property.

But he lingered on, neither getting worse, nor materially better; and, in the mean time, the Gilleston society, during the absence of so great a gun as Mr. Bernard Clement, was somewhat enlivened by the re-appearance of Lieutenant, now Captain Bannatyne. For he had obtained that promotion; and had likewise the good fortune to be appointed to the command of a brig then preparing for sea; which allowed him between three and four weeks to spend with his family, while his ship underwent the necessary fitting out.

The remembrance of Lucy Ayrton, though he never allowed himself to contemplate the possibility of his marrying her, had beguiled many a tedious hour during the various cruises of this young seaman; and his emotion at meeting her again, was beyond what he had been quite prepared for. Indeed, he could not but acknowledge, internally, that if she possessed such power over his thoughts and imagination, the impression, should they now see much of each other, might become serious: and, as he heard on all sides, that, in the event of his succeeding to his uncle's fortune, Mr. Clement would, unquestionably, be preferred, Captain Bannatyne exerted himself, and, could it have been accomplished by force, would have compelled himself to think of her merely as a valued acquaintance; and he wished, or professed to wish, for the time when his ship should be in readiness; and when, from absence and salt water, much might be expected to-

wards the conquest of a passion which had lately been gaining undue ground.

Nor was Miss Ayrton so completely indifferent towards him as she supposed, or as her parents, who were clearly in another interest, wished her to be. Her countenance frequently altered; visibly brightening whenever he came into the room: she had, on all occasions, more to communicate to him than to any other man, young or old; her decided preference for his conversation, when they met in mixed companies, she never endeavoured to repress; and many little tiffs took place between her and her mother, on the subject of such partiality; which Lucy, feeling confident that it would not and should not lead her into any irreparable imprudence, scrupled not to avow.

At length, the brig was fit for sea; and Captain Bannatyne, summoning all his resolution, bade adieu to his friends at Gilleston, and departed, little aware of the state in which he left Miss Ayrton.

In truth, that young lady, who ordinarily seemed to be as merry and good-humoured a girl, as she was a pretty one, was considerably out of sorts. She grew contemplative—moped—became averse to society—gave short cross answers, when forced into it—and was particularly fretful with her mother, who never could, or rather never would comprehend, what had happened to lower her spirits.

Much about this time, old Minchin, Mr. Clement's uncle, did really die at last; and very few posts passed through Gillington afterwards, before undoubted intelligence arrived, that, with exception of a legacy of eleven thousand pounds to Matthew Clement the younger brother, and about one thousand more, among friends, servants, and a few charities, the whole of his property, amounting to upwards of five thousand a year, besides a large sum of money in hand, had been bequeathed to our friend Bernard; who intended (it was also said), as soon as he



had got matters into some kind of arrangement, to take Sir James Roberts's house, near Gilleston, which just then chanced to be unoccupied by the family, and which Sir James wished very much to let for a twelvemonth.

In the interval between his uncle's death, and Mr. Clement's debut, in all his new splendour, at Gilleston—nothing was talked of but that gentleman and his great riches—his honourable intentions—his approaching suitable establishment—and the remarkable luck of Miss Lucy Ayrton; at whose feet, as eight out of ten of the neighbours affirmed, all this wealth was about to be laid, together with a husband so eminently handsome and agreeable, that, with half his present fortune, he might fairly have considered himself a match for almost any one of the most admired and best born girls in the country.

And certain it is, that Bernard Clement came down to Gilleston as early as he could possibly contrive. But before he

had been long settled in his new residence, and even while people continued to enlarge upon the good taste of all his appointments, and the truly gentleman-like style in which he lived, the usual effects of sudden prosperity upon a man of the world, who gives himself a full share of his own thoughts, began to be noticed.

He took a tone in conversation—some said—altogether different from what he had ever assumed before: he had formerly been agreeably particular for candour, and the total absence of every positive air when engaged in discussion: nor could people see, why his comprehension and knowledge upon politics and the common topics of the day, should have been increased all at once by the possession of five thousand a year. Others observed, that he had grown short-sighted—a defect which they had never hitherto remarked in him. Nay, even his peculiar friends and supporters, Mr. and Mrs. Ayrton, talked a little, of a sort of confident carelessness in his manners,

to which they had not altogether been used; and it was actually reported, that he addressed Miss Ayrton herself with a freedom and tone of security, which, at one moment, had endangered all his hopes in that quarter, and very eager those hopes still were.—Be that as it might, something had certainly happened to alarm him; and however he might behave to other people, he soon recovered his former carriage of deference, submission, almost adoration, towards Lucy, with whom, beyond a doubt, he was as deeply in love as man could be; and, after this rebuff, of whatever nature it was, he stood, proportionably, on his guard, in his intercourse with her parents.

But despite of the change in his circumstances, and his present very favourable situation, the matters that he had most at heart did not proceed so rapidly as Mr. Clement desired and expected. It cost him, occasionally, no small trouble to conceal his spleen, while in company with the Ayrton family: and when at home, his impatience

exerted itself in captiousness and peevishness to his inferiors, and sullenness, tartness of contradiction, and disregard to the feelings of those among his acquaintance, from whom he could reasonably look for no assistance in the advancement of his own plans.

He was riding out, one day, in this temper of mind, when he met with his old friend Mr. Vowles, the parson of the parish; who, instead of going by, with a cool bow, as Clement, well knowing that he had lately much neglected him,—thought, and indeed hoped he would—reined in his horse, as if he had something particular to impart; and, to make sure work, turned about, and joining Bernard, rode on with him in the same direction.

“ I believe,” he began, “ that your head is affected, Clement, to a certain degree, by the possession of your uncle’s fortune. You are an altered man, manifestly! But then, you should recollect, that all of us—we, at any rate, who have been your inti-

mates so long—remain, just where, and just what, we ever were: and, for my part, you must permit me to say, that I see nothing so awful in your late piece of good luck, as shall induce me, either meanly to coax an old Oxford friend, or to manœuvre and manage with his caprices—or, in short, to adopt a new manner towards him, in any respect whatsoever.”

“This is a pleasant, civil way of opening a conversation,” returned the other: “but you shall not find me so much altered, as to answer in the same strain, I can tell you. If ’tis your fancy to deliver lectures to me——proceed, in your own flippant style: and when you have said all that occurs to you, I presume, you will either leave me, or regulate your observations more according to the system of gentlemen.”

“That last expression,” said Mr. Vowles, “is designed to be bitter: but it only shews your disgust, without annoying me the least in the world. Now, just listen to me, Clement. We have known each other for

a monstrous long time; and, without pretending to much sentiment—without the least touch of the Pylades and Orestes—I have passed pleasant hours—aye, faith, delightful hours, in your society, and I've some regard left for you. So much, that, whether palatable or not, I am going to trouble you with my opinion upon a certain subject, which you, I suspect, have suffered to acquire so completely the dominion over your mind, that, notwithstanding your worldly good fortune, you are absolutely dependent upon it, at this minute, for all—I repeat the word—all your happiness in life; or such disappointment and utter discomfort, as may well be called misery. In the first place, I assume, that nothing on the face of the earth is of any consequence to you, compared with your passion for that girl! Am I not right?"

"You of the clergy," replied Bernard, "have a mode of mentioning ladies, peculiarly your own:—delicate, indeed! But I said, I would not interrupt you."

“ Very well; that’s discreet. Now then restrain yourself—don’t fly out, and be angry with me—but, upon my solemn word of honour, I have considerable doubts whether she likes you enough to accept you, notwithstanding all your attachment to her, all your attentions, both now and formerly, and all your present advantages.”

“ Perhaps she may like you better ?”

“ Well sneered;—but I say, perhaps—no such thing. You must be conscious, however, that women are not bound to return the affection of those who profess an affection for them : nay, that there is a frequent perverseness about them, which indisposes them to some men, for that very reason. Besides which considerations, I have a strong notion, in this instance, that if Lucy Ayrton were allowed to please herself, she might possibly look elsewhere.”

“ By all that is intolerable to the feelings of man,” exclaimed Clement, “ I know of nothing so offensive and disgusting, as a parson’s mingling in all the tittle-tattle, idle rumours, scandal, and nonsense of a

neighbourhood like this. I detest the practice, and despise those who forward it: and, little as I may be supposed to read my bible, I am grossly mistaken if such a character be not both virtually and expressly denounced in scripture, as an odious tale-bearer—a mischief-maker—a busy-body, from house to house!”

“Bravo!” cried the other, “that splenetic and spirited effusion wants nothing, but to be properly applied. So far, sir, from going from house to house, I never have mentioned to one single human being, but yourself, the preference to which I just now alluded—and it will be for you to consider——”

“Mr. Vowles,” said Clement hastily, “fifty pounds, according to my computation, will cover the different small sums which I may have borrowed from you occasionally. When I go home, I will send it to you: and, however slight our intercourse may be in future—I shall not be apt to complain of that circumstance.”



“ I mean to take what you owe me, sir, and neither less nor more,” replied Vowles : so, without further ceremony, they here parted ; and a friendship, or at least an intimacy, was dissolved at once, which had subsisted for upwards of twenty years of their respective lives.

Mr. Clement, although somewhat disheartened by the opinion which the vicar had pronounced, in spite of his resolution to regard it as mere rancour and envy—persevered in his addresses to Miss Ayrton ; of whom he continued so excessively fond, that he well might be said (according to the assertion of Mr. Vowles) to live for nothing else : and the idea of final rejection by her, was too shocking to be endured for an instant. Nevertheless, though his attentions were palpably favoured both by her father and mother, and perhaps, not altogether discouraged by herself—his progress was slow, and his state of mind, at times, sorely perplexed and uneasy.

A slight occurrence happened just now.

which, as it was followed, afterwards, by important results, cannot, with propriety, be omitted.

Bernard had a careless habit of placing, not only half-pence, (if accidentally he had any) but very frequently silver, upon his chimney piece, and of leaving all the servants in the family exposed to that temptation for many hours together.

The result was, that his halfpence were taken off, as a matter of course; and no few shillings had been pilfered also, before his attention was drawn to these petty depredations.

Having found out, at last, what had been going on for a long time, he worked himself up into as violent a passion, as if a share—and a considerable share too—of the blame had not belonged to his own heedlessness.

Every domestic, from the housekeeper to the scullion, now underwent a rigorous examination: but nothing could be substantiated against any of them.

A little girl however, the housekeeper's niece, who could scarcely be called a regular servant of the family, was most grievously suspected; her aunt acknowledging that her education, till of late, had been sadly neglected; and admitting, that she had many bad propensities, upon which, both forbearance and severity had hitherto produced but scanty effect.

This child, therefore—for her age certainly could not have exceeded thirteen—was permitted to stay on, in the house; rather with a view of detecting her misdeeds, than any expectation that a change for the better would be wrought in her disposition, by the tenderness and indulgence extended to her: and the servants, her own aunt in particular, were enjoined to watch her with all the circumspection in their power.

Meanwhile, Clement was more at the Ayrton's than ever; dined with them no less than four times, between the sixteenth and twenty-third of May; and took courage,

on Saturday the twenty-first, to talk to Lucy, as he had never, **EXACTLY**, talked before—in a manner, that is to say, which could no longer, by possibility, be misunderstood.

She said little in reply; but that little was not fatal to his hopes: and, thinking it might be injudicious to press the subject farther at that interview, Bernard took leave early in the evening, and went home—better satisfied with the day's progress, than he had ever yet been since he succeeded to his uncle's estate.

Mr. Mrs. and Miss Ayrton remained in the drawing-room: the old gentleman asleep upon the sofa; Mrs. Ayrton at work diligently with her needle, while her mind was employed upon jointures, settlements, wedding clothes, smothered envy, congratulations, the probable approaching establishment of her daughter, and the certainty that, after marriage, all would go right, whatever unaccountable prejudices might be entertained before that ceremony.

While Lucy, lolling back in her chair, with her elbow upon the arm of it, and her head resting upon her hand, sat deeply occupied in reflection likewise; but her reflections appeared to create far more anxiety than satisfaction.

“ You and Mr. Clement, my dear,” observed Mrs. Ayrton, at length breaking the silence, “ have had a great deal to say to each other to-day.—”

“ A great deal:” replied the young lady.

“ And your conversation, I trust, has been of a——of—a pleasant description to both parties; though nobody would suppose so, Lucy, by your looks. What ails the girl! Do act more cheerfully and naturally—prithee do. I cannot bear to see you sit moping there—you! whose prospects in the world are so fair and promising! ’Tis unthankful to Providence, who has blessed you, and placed you in such an enviable situation; and ungrateful to your father and myself, into the bargain. Since the hour

you were born, we have never had a wish upon earth, but for your happiness and advancement. What can have passed between you and that young man? Something particular, I would lay my life."

"He tells me," replied Lucy, "that he will call here again on Monday morning; and I can no longer pretend to be ignorant of his object in coming."

"Nor is there the least reason why you should. I rejoice, with all my heart, that things are tending to a thorough explanation: for, I must say, that, with his constancy, and his pretensions, he has been kept full long in uncertainty. How partial your father is to Mr. Clement's society, you know as well as I do; and you know, full as well, that his situation is, now, unexceptionable, and that I have the highest opinion of his principles, besides feelings of true regard and gratitude for his partiality to my family—when it might not be easy, my dear, to conceive a quarter in which his

addresses would now fail of being acceptable."

"My dearest mother, hear me. I shall not oppose your wishes; and I readily allow, that the continued persevering attachment of such a man as Mr. Clement is exceedingly flattering, and ought, perhaps, to have commanded more of my gratitude. But—I am far from happy; very far indeed; and when you talk of my lot in life being so enviable and superior—you do not know how you distress me—" She here burst into tears, and sobbed so violently, that she could not go on.

"Lord help you, girl; you will drive one to distraction!" exclaimed her mother.

"What now?" cried old Ayrton, rolling himself about upon the sofa—"What's all this piece of work! Have you got arguing with your mother, Lucy?—I'll have no perverseness, Miss. Your mother and I can only have your good at heart—and—perhaps you thought I was asleep; but, for this quarter of an hour and more, I have

heard every single syllable that you——Heyday! When did Clement go away and what's in the wind now!"

"Nothing, Mr. Ayrton," said his wife, vexed at his interference, as well as other matters—"Nothing that you need trouble yourself about. You are dreaming, at this moment, I fancy."

"Not a bit of it. How should one dream, Mrs. Ayrton, when one has never been asleep! and I tell you, as I told her before, that for the last half hour, I have heard every syllable that you both said; and could go over the whole, if I liked—that is—I mean, go over the whole argument, as you call it—word for word—if I liked. Dreaming—of all things in the world! That's good. How should one—How should one——How d'ye make that out?"

He was no sooner fast again, than Mrs. Ayrton renewed the discourse with her daughter, in a lower key.

"You torment me to death, Lucy: I



thought you had too much sense and firmness to give way to such indiscreet caprice—such infantine impressions. You may be sure, however, that neither your father nor myself mean to drive you into making yourself miserable—if this step does really make you so: but it will be a disappointment to us—a grievous disappointment, if you should dismiss this gentleman, without an adequate reason for such conduct: and the mere saying—“it will make me unhappy to marry him”—in that humoursome, childish, boarding-school-miss-ish way,—is not likely to afford us one grain of satisfaction. Why should you be rendered unhappy, by forming an alliance which, I am bold to say, will be approved of by every connection you have,—yes; and by every common acquaintance too, if they would speak the truth, without spleen or jealousy.”

“I have already told you, that I do not mean to refuse him,” replied Miss Ayrton: “and I tell you, now—that, if he proposes to me on Monday, I mean to accept him—

what can one say more?" but tears, which she could not controul, accompanied the whole of her answer.

"Then, you need'nt reply in that cap-tious tone, child!"

"Dearest mother, do not be angry with me. Let us hope, that this measure will turn out well; and, as both my parents so evidently desire it—my duty must be compliance. Sooner or later, the performance of a duty is, in general, rewarded."

"Lucy, it vexes me, I own it does—to hear you talk of accepting this handsome amiable young man, who dotes upon you, as of a sort of sacrifice. Do you know any harm of him, which we do not?"

"No: but sometimes I am almost afraid——Well, no matter."

"Say what you were going to say: I insist upon your speaking out."

"I sometimes have my doubts, whether he is a good man:——so good a man, that is, as you give him credit for being."

"That doubt," said her mother, "would

be properly enough urged, if there was the least ground for it: and I am, certainly, told, that he has been expensive, and at times, what one may call, extravagant. But most sure am I, that he has severely suffered for those irregularities. And truly, my dear girl, if you should form a resolution to marry no man who may have erred a little on the side of imprudence and expense, either at college, or at his first setting out in the world, I heartily hope we shall continue to make this house agreeable to you—for, assuredly, you will never be likely to leave it. But, Lucy, I trust, you are dealing sincerely with me all the while: you stare, my love; but cannot, I should think, be ignorant of my meaning. If you have formed any scheme of your own—any absurd attachment, which may indispose you to what we should feel it our duty to recommend,—I must apprise you fairly, that although we will, by no means, attempt to force your inclinations, you may likewise depend upon it, that we shall never

yield our consent to any wilfulness and headstrong folly—neither myself nor Mr. Ayrton.”

“Gadso!—Hey!” cried the old gentleman from the sofa—“Who calls? Here am I? What the devil do you want of me?”

“Hush, hush, make no answer,” said Mrs. Ayrton, with her finger on her lips, and did not proceed, till her husband, having turned into a comfortable position, was once more sound asleep. “Surely Lucy,” she then softly went on, “you never can have been so wild and romantic, as to give real encouragement to that young Bannatyne; with whom, by the way, you undoubtedly thought fit to strike up such a friendship, as I knew, from the first, would be productive of inconvenience to you. You sigh, my dear, and look offended; but nothing, except your own confession, shall induce me to suppose you so very great a fool.”

“Worldly wisdom, mother, may mislead us, now and then, as well as folly,”

replied Lucy, with much gravity; "but you need not alarm yourself about Captain Bannatyne. He will contribute to the happiness of some worthier woman: and, if he continues to distinguish himself as he has lately done, may aspire to whomsoever he pleases."

"I don't know that," said her mother; "notwithstanding his late success, of which I believe, indeed, there is no question. My only fear is, that it will set him at large again, for some time, and bring him back to this place; where, just at present, I am sure nobody wants him. His ship, I understand, has suffered terribly, and must undergo another long repair."

"'Tis most probable, they say," returned Miss Ayrton, "that he will be further promoted, and never have any thing to do with that ship again."

"I wish, with all my heart, Lucy, he were a Vice-Admiral of the—— whatever you please; provided he would keep away

from Gilleston, 'till a certain event had taken place."

"Ma'am, I am ready to assure you, over and over, as often as you shall choose, that as to the matter which you appear to have most at heart, you can, reasonably, fear nothing from Charles Bannatyne. And now, good night, for my head aches." Then, in a louder strain—"Good night to you, too, sir."

"God bless you, my dear," cried her father, starting up, and rousing himself: "Yo-ho! Lucy! You, going to bed! Why, what o'clock is it? I have more than half a mind, by George, to go to bed, myself. You, neither of you, do any single thing in the world to amuse one—and, for the last hour or so, hang me, if I haven't been nearly as much asleep as awake."

The decisive interview which had been fixed for Monday, took place accordingly; and Miss Ayrton, immediately afterwards, shut herself up in her own room, where she passed several hours entirely alone.

She was not even disturbed by her mother ; for that excellent, prudent woman had discovered all she wanted to know, by contriving to meet Bernard Clement as he went out of the house ; and learnt, to her complete satisfaction, that he was the most blessed of mankind—that he did not, and could not deserve such felicity—that he trusted, he never should do any thing to forfeit it—and that the alliance with their family, and, above all, the becoming HER son-in-law, was almost as high a subject of joy and exultation to him, as the being favourably listened to by her beloved daughter—with much more of the same sort.

Mr. Ayrton happened to be from home when all this occurred—but his consent, it may safely be assumed, was not long delayed : and, as both the parents were aware (although neither of them ever spoke to the other about the matter), that, of all the individuals concerned, their own daughter experienced least gratification, in these arrangements—they agreed, that it might be

advisable to get the wedding over as early as was practicable. The necessary preliminaries, therefore, were urged forward; lawyers and tradesmen expedited; a house taken for the honey-moon, in a most exquisitely romantic situation, between thirty and forty miles from Gilleston, and put into admirable order: and the wedding finally appointed for that day month.

Delectable news, this, for poor Charles Bannatyne! who, as we have heard, in some measure, from a late dialogue between Mrs. and Miss Ayrton, had been fortunate enough to signalize himself on the very first cruise after his appointment to the command of a ship; having fought a most gallant and desperate action with a large Dutch corvette, of fully double his own force: nor was the fate of the day, by any means, decided, when another English vessel, a sloop of war, came up, and completed the capture of the enemy.

In consequence of this affair, it was intimated to young Bannatyne, from the



highest authority, that he might expect speedy advancement in his profession; and in the mean time, his ship, which had nearly been cut to pieces, having been paid off, and sent into dock—he found that he had a spare month, at the least, upon his hands, which, on first hearing of this intended marriage, he determined to spend in some part of the island as far removed from Gilleston as possible. But on more mature consideration, he began to doubt the worthiness of this resolution, and at length totally altered his mind upon the subject.

Nothing had occurred (he settled) but what he ought to have been fully prepared for: and, whether that was exactly the case or not—he determined, at any rate, to act as if it had been.

Miss Lucy Ayrton (he often said to himself), however kind in her manner, had never given him reason to look for any thing further; as he must and would always do her the justice to allow. She was, now, nothing to him—nor ever could be; but he

would still remain on friendly terms with her—that's what he would; and be friends with her husband also: and, instead of skulking away, and contriving to avoid them, he would directly go to his father, at Gilleston—wish Miss Ayrton joy, with as thorough sincerity as any body else—and become acquainted with Mr. Clement, of whom he had heard so much, and whom, he had undoubtedly, a great curiosity to see.

Having come to this magnanimous decision, Charles put it in practice, as soon as he could: but owing to some business which detained him, beyond expectation, at the sea-port—he was only enabled to reach Gilleston on the Thursday evening previous to the marriage, which had long been fixed for the ensuing Monday.

Mr. Bannatyne received him, as a father who had always tenderly loved, and was now justly proud of him—might be expected to do. He expressed the warmest satisfaction at the manly manner in which Charles

took an event, which, he had feared, would have much disconcerted, if not considerably afflicted him; applauded his determination to call on the Ayrton's, with his congratulations; and agreed to accompany him thither, next day, at an hour when the family were pretty certain to be at home.

After breakfast, however, on the following morning, the Captain betrayed something more of uneasiness than he had yet manifested; he grew restless, and impatient; frequently asked, whether it were time to go to Mr. Ayrton's; heartily wished that the visit was over—and while he expressed his hopes that if they should be admitted by the other members of the family—he might not see Lucy—he generally contradicted himself, upon that point, before he had concluded his sentence.

His father, who made every allowance for Charles's state of mind, had the good sense not to notice it; and perceived, with pleasure, while they were on their walk to perform this meritorious piece of attention,

that he had, in a great degree, recovered his composure.

They talked, on their way, as it was most natural they should, of the only event which at that moment could be supposed to occupy their thoughts—Mr. Clement was much mentioned, of course : and the elder gentleman seemed astonished, that his son should never have met him, so very frequently as Bernard had been at Gilleston. But, on explaining particulars, it became quite clear, that they never could, on any occasion, have resided in that neighbourhood, at the same time—and that Charles Bannatyne, to the best of his belief, had never been brought into company with him, any where else, or once set eyes upon him, in the whole course of his life.

They arrived at the house, made their inquiries, and were shown in, to old Mr. Ayrtou, who, after his accustomed fashion, welcomed them with boisterous cordiality ; grasped Charles Bannatyne by the hand, as if he never intended to let him loose

again—observed, how very kindly he took his visit—trusted, that he would always be on the most friendly footing, with himself, and every individual belonging to his family—and did not see, why, as Clement was then in the house, the young men should not make acquaintance at once, without further fuss and formality.

Capt. Bannatyne instantly replied, that there was nothing he wished for more; and indeed, that he had come there, principally, with that very view. Which old Ayrton no sooner understood, than he possessed himself, this time, of both Charles's hands, commenced another furious fit of shaking and brandishing them about,—and told his father, that the Captain was a lad just after his own heart—a thorough British sailor—and (he was sure) would die a Peer. He then led the way up stairs, where they found Miss Ayrton, and a tall young man near her, leaning over the back of the sofa on which she was seated.

Lucy's manner was hurried and con-

fused, for an instant, at first sight of Charles Bannatyne; but, as if she had recollected that he could have no right to complain of her conduct in any respect, she rose; advanced to meet him, with frank good-will; and making a sort of movement with her hand towards the gentleman by her, who had also come forward, upon the appearance of the visitors—she just pronounced his name, by way of an introduction.

The two young men, however, had no sooner looked steadily at each other, than they mutually evinced the most unexpected and extraordinary agitation: Charles Bannatyne glowed, fiery red, over every part of his face, and Clement turned as pale as a corpse. They stood, staring upon one another, with eyes ready to start out of their heads; while their countenances seemed to express the utmost degree of astonishment, or horror, or indignation—or, perhaps, something of all those feelings combined.

Mr. Clement was the first to avert his face from this keen interchange of glances:

he withdrew from the gaze of the other—and turned towards Lucy Ayrton, as if desirous to discover what she thought of this strange scene.

“What affects you so, my dear Charles?” said the elder Mr. Bannatyne; “are you unwell? you told me, you know, that you had never seen Mr. Clement in your life.”

“Egad, to my mind,” said Mr. Ayrton, “they seem to be better acquaintances, than they are friends. Bernard, my boy, do, prithee, give us a little explanation of all this business. Were you acquainted with this young man before?”

“I thought I had been, sir, when you all first came into the room; but I now perceive that I was mistaken. I have not the pleasure of knowing the gentleman.”

“Are you sure of that, sir?” Charles Bannatyne asked, in a dry, and very peculiar tone.

“Quite sure,” replied Clement, mildly, but steadily: “I can, now, call to mind the

person for whom I mistook Captain Bannatyne."

"I wish it may be so, sir;" said Charles, taking up his hat—"but I recollect nobody whom I could possibly have mistaken for you."

Mr. Ayrton and his father interfered to prevent him from leaving the house, in this strange, and, to them, utterly inexplicable state; but they could not succeed. And while Miss Ayrton, and her lover, sat speechless—the one, trembling, distressed, and foreboding evil—the other, quite bewildered, by what was, evidently, no common perplexity—Mr. Bannatyne, finding his son resolute to go, accompanied him from the house; without attending to one word uttered by old Ayrton, who followed them down stairs,—perhaps threatening them—certainly talking with great heat and vehemence, all the way to the house door.

"Where are you going now, Charles, in



the name of heaven?" said his father, as soon as they had got into the road.

"To Mr. Vowles, sir."

"To the parsonage! why so? surely, if you have any thing important to communicate—I am as fit a person, as Mr. Vowles, to be admitted to your confidence."

"Sir, he acts as a magistrate; which you do not." Nor could Mr. Bannatyne extort one single word more, until they arrived at the parsonage.

"They were shown into the library, and detained there, until Captain Bannatyne, whose temper was always of the eager order, became excited, by his impatience, to such a pitch of irritation, that, contrary to his original resolution, he could withhold the secret from his father no longer—and at once he told him the cause of his most extraordinary deportment at Mr. Ayrton's. The old gentleman, on hearing it, was struck with positive consternation, and horror—and took refuge in his own incredulity; upon which subject the father and

son were disputing,—when Mr. Vowles came into the room.

With the sort of apologies that are made by a person affecting business, ability, and consequence, he proceeded to inform them, that he had been prevented from joining them before, by Mr. Clement's housekeeper; who, having at last detected her niece in robbing one of that gentleman's trunks—had (as her master was not at home) dragged the girl, in the first ebullition of her rage, straitway before the justice, with the pilfered goods in her possession.

“ You are aware,” he added, “ that Clement had money stolen from him, repeatedly, some time ago;—by one of his own people, clearly: and this girl having been shrewdly suspected—frightful—isn't it?—in so young a child—they afterwards set a close watch upon her; and you'll see, with what result. I must trouble you, therefore, to make haste with any thing you may have to say; for these persons are in the

house still—and I have not quite finished the examination.”

“ I am sorry—excessively sorry, to be under the necessity of stating to you,” said Captain Bannatyne, with the air of one who had made up his mind to a decisive and formidable step—“ Mr. Vowles, I am truly griev’d, to apprise you, that I have a somewhat similar charge, but of the most serious nature, to prefer against Mr. Clement himself. He robbed me, upon the highway, on the twenty-fifth of August, 17—, in Lord Alfray’s Park, at North Wolmer—and of that, I am prepared to make oath.

“ Bernard Clement!” exclaimed Mr. Vowles, absolutely shouting, so that he might have been heard in the kitchen.

“ Impossible!” cried Mr. Bannatyne, the elder; and so I assured him, Mr. Vowles, before you came in. This robbery happened nearly three years ago, you will please to take notice; Charles allows, that it was late in the evening; Mr. Clement—though, I believe, a great deal distressed

at one period—was always a gentleman, and a man of honour, to all intents and purposes—and—in short, the thing is incredible.”

“I am not altogether so confident of that;” observed the magistrate, after some deliberation.—“The way through Lord Alfray’s grounds, is open, I think, both by day and night?”

“Certainly;” said young Bannatyne; “’tis a public road.”

“Clement’s reputation, I lament to say,” continued Mr. Vowles, “was very indifferent at Oxford; and I take blame to myself, for not having spoken out, more openly, here: only, when a man is one old acquaintance, you see—why, one doesn’t like to take the lead in depreciating him. But he was of the class who are for carrying their points by the shortest method,—with no more principle, than that dog, there; and he has been reduced; I have good reason to know,—to such shifts, as his friends at Gilleston little dreamt of.

You said, the twenty-fourth of August, did you not?—in the year 17—?”

“The twenty-fifth:” said Charles.

“Aye—well—the twenty-fifth then. Now, I can inform you, that, on the twenty-third, he borrow’d a pair of pistols from me, in this very room, which I never saw again, from that hour to the present. As sure as Heaven’s above us, this will turn out an awkward affair. It was late in the day, though, according to you, when the robbery took place—Now, how late?”

“About sun-set; or rather, immediately after the sun had gone down.”

“But, could you see his face?”

“As plainly, as I see yours now. Besides, I had dined at the Pelican, one stage from North Wolmer, when he, and others, were in the room all the time. And there, I was young enough, and fool enough, to brag of my money, which I then thought inexhaustible, and of my determination to defend it, against all hazards on the road. I remember him, at that Inn, perfectly

well—his figure, and countenance, both struck me, particularly—not that I knew him, in the least, nor he, me.”

“ This is a shocking business,” said Mr. Bannatyne; “ a very shocking business. Might it not be hushed up, Charles? surely it might.”

“ I have no desire to ruin him,” replied the young man; “ still less to take his life:—but Lucy Ayrton shall never be sacrificed to so abandoned a character.”

“ Just excuse me, for five minutes,” said the magistrate; “ I must have up these people, and dismiss them. As for the girl, I think I shall commit her, young as she is.”

A servant answered the bell; and Mr. Clement’s housekeeper, with her niece, and the two other maids who had attended as witnesses, being ordered up; Mr. Vowles desired, as soon as they came before him—to see the property which had been found upon the child. Several articles were produced, in consequence; one of which in-

stantaneously caught Captain Bannatyne's eye. "Come here, sir; do pray, come this way," he cried, to his father. "By all that's great and good! look here. Did you ever see this before?"

"G—support me!" said the old gentleman, much agitated; "'t is the portrait of your mother, which I gave you when you first went to sea."

"No doubt of that," replied his son; "and I think I can comprehend the whole course of the thing. When he had found out that the stones all round the picture were false, and worth nothing at all—he threw it aside somewhere, and probably afterwards, forgot it entirely. I see through the whole thing."

"Where did you find this—you girl?" said Mr. Vowles: "tell me this instant."

"Bless me, your honour—pray, your worship forgive me, this one time—only this once—pray, your worship's honour—Oh Lord, what shall I do! well then—I'll tell you—I'll tell—I'll tell the truth, indeed.

I found this here picture in the hole with a little door to it, right at the back of Mr. Clement's trunk: it laid all up in one corner, under a parcel of old boots and shoes, and ever so much brown paper, all torn and dirty—what sarved for packing with, I believe. Oh, pray, sir—don't ye go to send me to——”

“Silence!” cried the justice. “Mr. Charles, had you this ——” but he recollected himself, and first disposed of the housekeeper with the rest of her party. Then, after waiting 'till the sound of their footsteps had ceased.—“Had you this miniature in your possession, at the time when you were robb'd, in Lord Alfray's Park?”

“I had: and the robber took it from my neck, with his own hands, while I supported myself against the front window of the chaise—wounded, and quite disabled.”

After a long and deep consultation, the two Barnatynes, and the justice—(the latter, nothing loath, for, of late, he had hated Clement, with the most cordial aver-



sion)—repair'd, with peace-officers in attendance, in case their aid should be required, to Mr. Clement's mansion, between eleven and twelve o'clock, at night: by which time, as they rightly judged, he had returned home, after passing the evening—a most unsatisfactory and uneasy evening it was—with his intended father-in-law.

The servants at Mr. Clement's supposed, that all this posse had arrived, merely to apprehend the young culprit, who had been in her bed some hours—and were unable to comprehend the necessity for such a force. But after the three gentlemen had been closetted with their master, for nearly an hour—they heard the latter raise his voice, in a very particular manner—in a tone to which they had been little accustomed. They heard him speak, as if he wept—and soon, there could be no doubt, that he actually was shedding tears: his voice became shrill; and his vehement and impassioned utterance, mingled with shrieks of bodily, or mental agony, distinct-

ly audible all over the house—was dreadful to hear, and alarmed them exceedingly.

All at once, they heard a dead weight fall to the floor: and while the maids screamed and screeched, the men-servants were for bursting into the room; but the constables in attendance restrained them, with difficulty; and sent one of their own party, to learn what was going on.

Nobody proved to have been hurt: but it was whispered, next day, that Mr. Clement having attempted to cut his own throat—Captain Bannatyne had scarcely succeeded in preventing him, by a struggle, in which they both came down together.

After that effort, all was said to have remained quiet, for the rest of the night.

Clement sat, with his hands fast clenched together, in blank despair—and, for the greater part of the time, his eyes were shut, as if he had been dozing; but an occasional convulsive sigh, sufficiently proved, if proof had been wanting, that he never slept a wink.

In this way matters proceeded at Mr. Clement's house; till the morning was so far advanced, that, at about half-past nine, the Ayrton family sat down to a cheerless breakfast enough—Lucy, silent, uncomfortable, and apprehensive—Mrs. Ayrton fretful—and her husband, gloomy—disposed to be violent in his discourse; and menacing some of his neighbours, in a mysterious manner—but more particularly the Bannatynes, both father and son, for having produced all the uneasiness of the day preceding.

However, such a state of things was not likely to last long, nor did it;—for before their meal was over, a short letter, unevenly written, scrawled, blotted and stained with tears, but in Clement's handwriting, and with his unquestionable signature at the bottom—was delivered to Miss Ayrton.

She snatched it up, visibly trembling from head to foot; opened it hastily; read it twice through to herself; in spite of her

father's continual and impatient questions; and then,\* handed it to him—observing, that she was only sure of something dreadful having taken place—but as ignorant as ever,—what. Old Ayrton, knitting his brows, frowned over the letter; and, after several verbal mistakes, read it aloud, as follows.

“ I scarcely know what I write—but suppose, I must write something—for I am about to leave Gilleston this moment, never to see you again: never to see my dearest, my ever-beloved Lucy more, for whom alone I lived, or wished to live. I will not survive this disgrace—this cruellest and most accursed of disappointments—I will not indeed. I thought I had been unhappy enough before; but never, till this moment, did I know what real misery was. They may fetter me, and confine me while I remain here; but when I get to the continent, my life will be at my own disposal. I have been most iniquitously used, Lucy. From a spirit of jealousy and rivalry, they have work-

ed out my ruin—because you would have married me, and for no other reason upon earth. I am entrapped—basely entrapped, by my greatest enemies ; and at length—— O! I cannot go on: 'tis impossible to explain myself: I hardly see the paper that I write upon; for my head swims, and I am sick at my very heart. You will hear me calumniated—but I have been reduced to dreadful want and distress, Lucy; and when I knew not where in the world to turn for a temporary supply—I may have been guilty—(you will hear them much exaggerated)—of some steps, false steps which are quite irreparable, and of which they are now taking a barbarous advantage.

“ My dearest love, they are about to banish me from England, for the remainder of my life: but the remainder of my life will be but short—I know that.

“ Fare you well, my only love. Heaven eternally bless you—you dearest thing! Forgive me, for ever having presumed to

aspire to you; for I am a bad man, and totally unworthy of you: though, perhaps, those who have ruined me, destroyed my happiness just as it was on the point of being perfected, and blasted all my hopes, both here and for ever—may not be so very much better than myself. I am wealthy now, but what can my wealth do for me! When I die, Lucy;—and I hope that will be very soon—I shall leave it all to you; and, in that respect, I may yet consider you as my wife; which is the only thing like comfort that remains to

Your wretched and distracted

BERNARD CLEMENT."

This letter, however unintelligible at first, was soon fully explained; and Mr. and Mrs. Ayrton, although vexed to the heart, and ready to quarrel with every body round them, could not but admit, in a little time, that their daughter's escape from an union with so utterly unprincipled a person, was, in truth, a great blessing;

and that Captain Bannatyne, who had evidence sufficient to have prosecuted Clement to his death, had acted more mercifully towards him, than was, perhaps, consistent with his duty to the public.

As to Mr. Bernard Clement, he made the best of his way to America; and, whatever he might have threatened, or intended, when he left England—most certainly, he did not put an end to himself during his passage out, nor upon his arrival. On the contrary, he lived in the United States till the peace of Amiens; took that opportunity of returning to Europe; and was alive and well, at Bourdeaux, not three years ago.

Miss Ayrton, who had never been in the least attached to Clement, but had only given way, against her own judgment, to his perseverance, and the wishes of her parents—could not be supposed to have felt any deep affliction from the interruption of their marriage: she was shocked, however,—excessively shocked—at his dis-

grace and misfortunes; and talked, for a long while, as if she had never intended to alter her condition. Nor did she marry Charles Bannatyne until he was a post captain of considerable standing, and, besides great success in his profession, had succeeded to a paternal estate, which, altogether, produced them an exceedingly good income—but by no means too much—for they had twelve children; and moreover, twelve healthy and remarkably fine children.



## FRIAR ROBERT'S WALK.



It has been observed by a certain authoress from the North, whose works were, at one time, in request; that, about twenty-six years ago, sundry romance writers (one, in particular) became extremely popular, by attempting to frighten all the world—because all the world had, just then, a fancy for pretending to be frightened. There was, perhaps, the usual proportion of truth in that remark, which may be allowed to most pointed passages in a preface. The fact being, we believe, that, at all periods, the generality of mankind, intent upon their own interests and the every-day business of life, have had little time or inclination for histories of local

superstitions, or the sort of fare served up in the works just alluded to. While a certain number there always were, and always will be, whose ardour—like Dr. Johnson's—to establish some additional proofs of another state of being for us after this, may dispose them to attend with seriousness, and a mixed sort of pleasure, to any well authenticated accounts of supernatural interposition.

Is it not, therefore, a mistake, or misrepresentation, to make dogmatic assertions upon the subject—as many of our contemporaries do—and to say, in the cant of the present age—“So many new lights from reason and increasing knowledge, have, of late, arisen among mankind, that it is impossible, in any case, for such stories to be so much as listened to hereafter?”

As long as they are credited, they will surely be listened to; and no longer ago than the year 1800, some incidents of so remarkable a nature occurred within a

very few miles of London itself, as utterly bewildered the inhabitants of that thickly peopled neighbourhood, and, to this hour, still confounds them, philosophers and all.

Not many parts of England, one would imagine, are better known than the village or small town of Wandsworth in Surrey; between which place, and Nine Elms near Battersea, stood, in the year 1800—and, for any thing we know, stands at this moment—a large, deplorable looking, dirty white house, possessing a strong character of antiquity no doubt, but of little enough grandeur; not absolutely upon, though every thing but upon, the banks of the Thames.

This house, in the above year, figured away as a tavern; the name whereof—(no painted sign, during a long time, had been exhibited there)—was the Golden Crane. It seems natural to suppose, that so situated, and at so easy a distance from the metropolis, the house should have been frequented, and have received considerable en-

couragement ; but such, we hear, was by no means the case, in any great degree. Evans the landlord was a precise ungracious personage ; a sworn enemy to long scores ; and so averse to all jollity verging towards riot, that many called him a Methodist ; which answered the end of their spleen pretty effectually : indeed, the reputation of his establishment as a public-house, would have been less injured, probably, had they stigmatized him for a murderer.

But they could not absolutely ruin him, nor was the concern of the Golden Crane entirely deserted either. His enemies might call Mr. Evans what they pleased, but they could do him no harm beyond a certain point : he had requisites for his situation ; and the truth appears to have been, that, provided no public discredit was brought upon his house—the old fellow had as keen, and perhaps as unscrupulous an eye to his own benefit, as any conductor of a similar place of entertainment in or about London.

A society of men, mostly young men, were in habits of assembling there frequently, at the period before adverted to; against whose conduct, with regard to decency and propriety, nothing could readily be urged by the neighbours. They drank deep indeed—so it was generally reported—but no frays, no outrages, no indecorum, scarcely even were any noises to be complained of, on the evenings of their fullest meetings.

Things, however, do get about some how or other; and a whisper found its way into circulation, that these persons (although they never styled themselves so, most assuredly) were the legitimate descendants of certain profligate and blasphemous societies, too common in much higher life, about the beginning of the late king's reign, which went by the unhallowed name of "hell-fire clubs."

Some of these young men were lawyers without employment, or the remotest chance of ever getting away; one or two

were students in medicine, of good family, some expectations, and proportionable dislike and disgust to their profession; and three at the least, we understand, might be considered as men of fortune: they had a good deal of money in the funds, that is to say—but no landed property; and consequently nothing to take them away from leading an idle and vicious life, about town. One of this latter class, and perhaps indeed, the leading member of the club, was a certain Sir Grey Carmichael; who might have been seen on the 3d of July, 1800, rather late in the afternoon; sitting in the upper bow-windowed room of the Golden Crane; he was lolling against one end of a not over clean sofa, and sprawling out his legs upon the whole of what ought to have been the white cover of it; while he occasionally engaged in a desultory conversation with three other young men likewise present on this occasion, and all waiting for their dinner. By their discourse it appeared, that they

had not come down from London so much to attend a regular meeting of the club, as for the purpose of sundry aquatic excursions which were to constitute the occupation of nearly the entire week; and for the sake of which, these worthies meant to take up their quarters at the tavern during several successive nights.

They had as good a dinner as the house afforded; and after the cloth was removed—according to a practice so old by this time, that it was only wonderful the society were not universally sick of it—the wine was abused, and the landlord sent for.

“We were willing to flatter ourselves, Evans,” said Sir Grey Carmichael, “that you had nothing more remaining of this vintage.”

“Sorry I don’t give you satisfaction, gentlemen,” replied the other, somewhat sulkily.

“You should take greater pains with your port,” observed a young man in new

boots and leathers, with a countenance deeply pitted, or rather lined, by the small-pox. "I have tasted wine of your manufacture very superior to this. I say though, when's the half pipe of claret to be laid in?"

"When I get my debts paid me, Mr. Marshall," replied the landlord; an answer which was received with a general titter.

"Come, come, Evans; no personalities," said Sir Grey. "You touched from thirty to forty pounds last week; you know you did. No denial now—with that cursed grumbling, carping, discouraging, never-satisfied face; I insist upon it, you touched thirty pounds and upwards; and what's more, you had the money from Radcliffe."

"And I tell you, Sir Grey, that I haven't so much as set eyes on Mr. Radcliffe since last March."

"Upon your honour? No—I beg pardon, upon your credit?"



"Is there any thing more you want of me, gentlemen?" the landlord asked.

"More? I like your assurance, you old extortioner! We've got nothing out of you yet, not even a promise of better treatment hereafter. Do take both the bottles of this fiery stuff down stairs with you, and convert them into bishop forthwith." Upon this, Mr. Evans made his retreat. The bishop, in due time, smoked upon the table; and that bowl was dispatched, with several others.

In the progress of this evening, many subjects were discussed, which we cannot, with common propriety, lay before our readers; and 'tis well for them, after all, that we cannot; for one may venture to affirm, that more ordinary and disgusting ribaldry, more weak, violent, and ill-disposed politics, and more common-place, dull, and pitiful impiety, have seldom disgraced even a party of bucks and bloods.

As the club, however, prided themselves on their emancipation from all prejudices, and as the topic of infidelity was ushered

in with the crowning bowl of boiled port wine—it will surprise nobody (who has ever had the ill-luck to attend such discussions) to be informed, that, before they broke up—these select sons of spirit, these men of enlarged minds, had recourse, in prosecution of their unbecoming ridicule, to all the nonsense which children are either told in the nursery, or which they infallibly hear within the first three weeks after they have been placed at their very first school. What exactly introduced these sort of stories, we cannot say: probably the instances—none of them very new—which our jovial companions were retailing from books, or former conversations, of priest-craft and imposture.

“You are all wrong, Morrison,” said Mr. Marshall, the gentleman in shining new boots, whom we have already noticed.

“You’re completely out, my man. Their notion was—a set of asses!—not merely that evil spirits preferred this or that situation, because they were possessed of particular powers there. But that

every single individual had both good and bad angels belonging to him personally, and consequently attendant upon him wherever he went. Which angels, if he would venture——”

“ I know all that,” cried Morrison, “ and was coming to it; only you won’t let any one speak but yourself.”

After some rather angry controversy as to which of the two was most addicted to engrossing the conversation, the latter proceeded to state what he had been “ coming to:” and repeated the following idle gabble as the opinion of —— we know not what sect, either in Wales, or America.

“ Let a man,” said he, “ imprint the form of a cross reversed—with the horizontal beam downwards—you understand—upon his own forehead, with his own blood: then let him do the same on a sheet of fair white paper, and likewise write his name at full length (all in his own blood, you know—mind that), above the inverted cross. He must then fold up the paper in a triangular form, and put it under his pillow.

Let him do all this, and, according to their legend, his good angel will depart, and his evil one appear to him in the course of that same night."

Pot-valiant as our free-thinkers were now becoming, no one can wonder if this communication was followed by a shout loud and unanimous; which, as the laugh died away, concluded with a proposal from the baronet that the experiment should be made, and made directly. Mr. Marshall, however, who seems to have had his own reasons for not adventuring upon the trial, burlesqued the business with all the force of humour he was master of; and declared, supporting the position by many oaths, that he would have nothing to do with such wretched superstition and absurdity: thereby only proving to his companions, that, drunk as he was, he had not courage to go through with the experiment. On the other hand, Mr. Morrison, when urged to perform the ceremony himself, admitted fairly, that though nobody could possibly

hold such folly in greater contempt—yet he felt indisposed, he owned, he felt averse to trusting his own imagination. From childhood (he said,) he had been subject to inexplicable horrors in the night-time; and he did not choose to do any thing which might further excite the vagaries of fancy.

Now it appeared, who was the person really and justly entitled to the place of honour, to the elbow chair, among these sons of pleasure and philosophy. Without a moment's delay, Sir Grey Carmichael laid bare his left arm; dashed into his flesh a three-pronged steel fork, with the resolution and audacity of inebriety; drew blood quite enough for his purpose, and made every mark that was requisite, in immense characters, both upon his own forehead and the paper. They then wound up the evening with broiled bones, red-herrings, and punch; and Sir Grey, when he went to bed, duly laid the charm under his pillow. How soon these bon-

vivants, with their skins full of liquor, were wrapped in balmy slumbers, one may readily conceive. On comparing notes next day, it should seem, that every one of them believed himself to have been dead asleep within three minutes after he rolled into bed; and two of the three awoke with such a nausea and headache, the natural effect of their debauch, that it was nearly eleven o'clock before they came down to breakfast.

Whether Sir Grey Carmichael suffered in an equal degree, we have not heard. He never complained—that is most certain; and he was up, not merely before the rest, but very particularly early.

Between the tavern of which we have been speaking and the river, was a foot-path somewhat more than a hundred and fifty yards in length; with a full-grown, strong, flourishing hedge on one side, and a high stone wall on the other: and old Evans, the landlord, could scarcely believe his eyes, when on opening his

window-shutter between five and six in the morning, he saw his guest the baronet (utterly contrary to all his usual habits), dressed for the day; out of doors; and proceeding, with vigorous strides, towards the head of this lane, which he shortly afterwards entering, Mr. Evans could discern his progress no further.

Evans found his head-waiter, when he went down, breaking up a sugar loaf; and mentioned the circumstance to him with some surprise: on which the waiter stopped for a moment, listened to what was said, and went on working without a word of reply. Nor did his wife, the partner of his joys and soother of his sorrows, enter much into Mr. Evans's feelings in this instance: he repeated to her what he had seen, as rather a strange occurrence—but only succeeded in extorting the following answer.

“Aye—They will have their whims, them gentlefolks; however, for my part, I'd rather they ris' early, than wallop'd

abed till one's ready to begin with the dinners."

Sir Grey returned to the apartment where breakfast was laid out, long before either of the others made his appearance; and was employed in looking out of the window with such seeming attention, when Mr. Morrison came in—(though it would be difficult to say what was going on within his view)—that the latter gentleman had spoken twice, at the least, before the baronet perceived any one else to be in the room. At last, the word "reverie" caught his ear.

"So I was, by heavens! I was in one, faith!" said he, turning round with a laugh which made up in noise for what it wanted in heartiness: "how long have you been down stairs, Morrison? Has Marshall favoured the world yet? I never saw, I must say, two fellows more properly knocked up by less—I'll take my oath—decidedly less than three pints apiece. What miserable milk-sops you are!"



“Three pints! three devils!” cried the other, sinking languidly into an old-fashioned great chair — “three gallons, more likely; and such a composition too! about as suitable to the organization of one’s inside, as so much lava drawn red hot from the mouth of Mount Vesuvius. Upon my soul, I’m ill-ish; if one was to say ‘very ill,’ greater lies may have been told in my time. When I first got out of bed, I swear, I thought I should have fainted away: if I didn’t expect to cut my throat, once for all, in shaving, I’m a French Grenadier. Twice running, sir, did I thrust my arm through my waistcoat, with every single button turned — Stop, O ho! I recollect now: stop a minute. What became of the bloody cross, &c. &c.? Did you get a sight of ‘the enemy?’ What kind of a looking chap is he?”

Sir Grey faintly smiled; and, after pacing the room four or five times — “Hark ye, James,” said he, “don’t you repeat a word of this to Marshall, and I’ll tell you

a curious thing. I had a very uncommon dream—if it was a dream: I had, upon my life.”

“ You are joking,” said Morrison: “ zounds! egad though, he doesn't look as if he joked: and 'tis not improbable, but that the inflamed state of the blood—No, nonsense: are you serious ?”

“ Inflamed state of the blood, hey? Aye, the very same idea occurred to me,” replied Sir Grey: “ the effect of all that hot wine might be, to light up a fever, and make one delirious; for, as to its being an ordinary dream—I'll be shot if it was; any more than I am dreaming now. Morrison! do you consider me to have much superstition about me ?”

“ As little as most folks:—a devilish deal less than I have myself,” he added in a lower tone, turning his head away at the same time.

“ Well then, listen to me, my good fellow,” resumed the baronet. “ I feel so doubtful whether something very extra-

ordinary has, or has not, happen'd to me—that, as surely as I shall eat my breakfast this morning—I am resolved to go to bed sober, aye, perfectly sober, to-night; and to try the effect of this confounded strange, wild, out-o'-the-way charm, once again—which (*if nothing comes of it,*) will be sufficient.”

“Are you? by —— ———.”

“Hold your tongue;” cried Sir Grey—“here comes Marshall. Take no notice of what I have been saying.” Mr. Marshall entered the room with the accustomed roar of laughter which was apt to serve these choice spirits instead of genuine fun and wit, whenever they found themselves below their usual pitch.

“May all the disorders that ever annoyed mankind, personal, hereditary, and contagious,” cried he, “seize on the cookers-up of English Port-wine in general. May the sauce-pans employed in boiling it, universally rot and perish; with all roasted lemons—and those, most peculiarly, which

are stuck full of cloves. How's your head, to-day, Jemmy Morrison, Esquire? Ah, Sir Grey—you have beat us hollow, I hear. Sam the waiter tells me—what a thorough grain'd impudent dog that is, by the way—that you could put us two under the table at any time, and be up before sun-rise yourself, just as if you'd supp'd upon toast and water and artichokes. Give us your hand, my little necromancer—my little fiend-raiser—and do tell us what was produced by the bloody manuscript. Is your arm sore, this morning? I say—that famous feat proves one thing, however: dash me—you wouldn't have been so forward to shed your own blood, without the aid of Bishop! you had no dreams then, after all?"

"I beg your pardon," replied the Baronet, who, during the preceding fit of chattering, seemed to have considered how he should parry all these questions. "I beg your pardon, there: I dreamt—but can you keep a secret?"

“ Can I? ha, ha, ha, can I not? I'm confidant, I tell you, to some of the best fellows about town; so let's have your secret without longer preface. Just touch the bell though, first; the water's as cold as if it had been brought out of the Thames this moment.” When the waiter had gone out with the urn, Sir Grey Carmichael resumed —“ Why, I dreamt, you must know, that three grisly-looking women, whom you may have read of at school, call'd the Furies—stood by my bed-side. They each made me a low curtesy; and the younger of the three, whose name, if I rightly remember, is Tisiphone, thus address'd me :”

“ We are given to understand, sir, that you have the habit of keeping bad company.”

“ Now, as of all conceivable charges, that happen'd to be the one, against which, I always expected to feel least difficulty in justifying myself—I had eagerly begun to reply—when one of the elder sisters stopp'd me, by a slap on the mouth; and a pretty

sharp slap too, I can tell you." "Mock us with no lies or prevarications," said she, in a voice which made my flesh creep:" "Hast thou not been wasting this very last evening, in the society of one Maskall, or Marshall—a wretch, alike destitute of wit, merit, and talents?"—"What think you of that, Ned? there was a home-thrust: there was a clincher, at the outset! the thing, you see, had never been put to me, all at once, in that strong light, before. However, while she was talking—a most dissonant and horrible yell, from another quarter, resounded in my ears; and, with the inconsistency belonging to all dreams, I fancied myself on the banks of the river Phlegethon, which, somehow or other, extremely resembled the open sewer that runs beneath the paling of this garden, so on, through Toms's tan yard, and so on, to the Thames."

"My dear fellow, what have we perpetrated, to deserve all this?" cried Marshall: "you be hang'd; with your dreams.

Infernally dull indeed—you, and the furies! By jove, though, I must contrive to get rid of this dizzy head-ache."

"Well, my merry-men all in green; and what's to be done to-day?" said Morrison.

For two hours and upwards, after that question, nothing was done: they sat on, listlessly; sometimes attempting to raise a laugh at each other's expense; sometimes talking all three together; and sometimes picking their teeth, or touching up their cravats at the glass, in total silence. At last it was announced that the tide would serve; and they ordered the waterman, usually employed by them, to hold himself in readiness.

These young men went down to their boat, by the narrow walk between a stone wall and a high hedge, which has already been noticed: and Sir Grey Carmichael appearing to loiter—was reprov'd for so doing, by Mr. Morrison.

"Do we call this lane," said the baro-

net, "by its proper name? I mean, do all the nursery-garden people, soap-boilers, and ale-house keepers who live hereabouts, call it Friar Robert's Walk, as well as ourselves?"

"The deuce a bit," replied Morrison; "all that is a fancy of Redcliffe's, and nothing else in the world: he has got some whims in his head, I think;—I never much listen'd to them, heaven knows——about a monastery which formerly stood here; and which, he says, this house made a part of. So he invented the name, and the club seem to have adopted it. You understand Redcliffe, and his ways: he wanted us to call each other, Friar this—and brother that—and father t'other—and so on; but it wouldn't do: besides, such waggery is none of the newest."

They had now reached the boat, of which they took possession forthwith.

Not much was said as they went up the river: Mr. Marshall, indeed, told a story; and Morrison laughed at it—full as heartily,



according to the avowed opinion of Sir Grey Carmichael—as it deserved.

The baronet then gave up the rudder to one of his companions, and leaned back in the boat, with his eyes half shut; indulging his thoughts, free from restraint, and flattering himself that he was not remarked by either of the others.

But Mr. Morrison happened to labour under some of the awkwardest defects, for a dasher, an espritfort, and an atheist, that one can imagine; being timid by nature, credulous by narrow-mindedness, and, to speak truly, superstitious in the extreme. What Sir Grey had told him, therefore, before Marshall came down to breakfast, had, ever since, laid a strong hold upon his imagination. He felt not quite comfortable; and although a certain fascination (which many will perfectly comprehend), attended his anxiety—he was, occasionally, inclined to hope, that Carmichael had been amusing himself, by imposing on him: though, at the same time, he could not but

recollect, that, when the design was to get rid of the subject, beyond all question—the baronet had taken a very different tone, a tone of banter namely, with their mutual friend.

In this disposition, Mr. Morrison watched Sir Grey closely, all through the day; and with the natural acuteness, or rather ingenuity of a mind pre-occupied by a particular idea—he thought he could adduce, from every word uttered by him, and yet more, from his frequent silence and abstraction of mind, a decided confirmation of his having spoken the truth (as far as he went), in the morning.

After a little while, Sir Grey began to suspect, probably, that he was the object of the other's regards, or to fear that he might become so: for he roused himself to talk; and took part in a political dispute, of which Mr. Marshall bore the principal share, and upon which he had been dilating for some time, aided rather than not by occasional contradiction from Mr. Morrison. "Such

a feeling," said Marshall, "I cannot call a truly British one."

"Why so? The genius of our constitution is monarchical, surely," cried Morrison.

"No. The form is, but the genius is not. The genius of our constitution leans to the democratical part of it."

"What do you mean by its genius?" said Sir Grey. "To be sure, I shall also have you against me," returned Marshall; "because you enjoy a rag of hereditary rank: but I'm not used to be mealy-mouthed; and I confess myself, in principle, a republican—a democrat, if you think fit to call me so. My belief is, that the only upright men in the country are those who go by the name of the mob."

"Bravo! That's fair," said Carmichael; "I always like a man to run his full career at the outset. You think, then, that a good education has a tendency to make people dishonest?"

"As to what's generally called so—I've

no doubt but it has. The fictitious habits of the higher orders are the source of all the corruption and falsehood in the nation. Natural probity is the result of natural manners; and I hold, therefore, that the poor, who are brought up in the state nearest to nature, have the best chance of being the most worthy men."

"Certainly: and the best bred men," added Sir Grey.

"Aye," cried the other, "and the best bred, too; if by good breeding, you mean real benevolence; and not bowing, slaving, and twisting your body into ridiculous attitudes."

"Please to sit a little more o' t'other side the boat, sir," said the waterman, who had just succeeded in pulling over to the Middlesex side of the water; and who, in endeavouring to keep near the shore, was obliged to pass an empty coal barge; on board of which were six or seven ragged lads, of all ages, seemingly, from twelve to five-and-twenty. As our gay companions

went by—either something ludicrous in their appearance, or something that had previously been said, in the barge, or mere wanton insolence—produced from these boys a loud shout of laughter.

“ I enjoy that, now,” cried Marshall : “ well said, my lads—my honest fellows ! That style of fun is so thoroughly English ! dash me, but I’d take the word of either of you, at any time, and upon any occasion, rather than the oath of the first duke in the land—” Before he had done speaking, an oyster shell, skimmed from the barge, dipped in the water close by their boat, and made, what is called, a duck and drake over it ; while, in less than two seconds afterwards, the body of a battered tin kettle, bereaved of the spout, and dirty as the back of any chimney in Westminster—descended from a considerable elevation, upon the shoulder of the republican ; be-daubing all his neckcloth, as well as coat, and bruising the upper part of his arm so that the mark could be both seen and felt

for upwards of forty hours. He started up, with tremendous imprecations. "Run us aboard of them, Stephens," cried he to the waterman: "If the rest will stand by me—I'll undertake to work those rascals, as they never were work'd yet: I'll break their bones, by —, every mother's son of 'em."

"No such thing," said Morrison, "pull away, Stephens, on the contrary, as hard as you can;—pull out of their reach. The devil! I have given up boxing for many a year."

"And I," said the baronet, laughing most heartily, "commend them rather than otherwise. That style of fun is so thoroughly English."

Mr. Marshall turned about quickly; and with a very peculiar expression of face, stared at Sir Grey for a full half minute: but not perceiving, during that time, any alteration in the countenance of the other, from the smile of ridicule accompanied by the most perfect composure, with which he

had made his remark—the Sieur Marshall again averted his eyes ; and looking nearly as black as the kettle that had discomposed him—sat, mute and sulky ; till a refreshing dinner had, in some degree, restored his temper. Though we never heard of the discussion about the form of government best suited to secure the real welfare of mankind, having been afterwards resumed.

They dined at a house, we were about to say, in Isleworth ; but that was not strictly the fact : they dined at a house far too well known, to require any description here, situated between Isleworth and Twickenham.

In the evening—a delicious evening it was—our men of pleasure crossed the water ; and walked in some meadows a little to the southward of Richmond, near one of the few mansions remaining, the grounds attached to which are laid out in the formal, but grand and venerable fashion, of the sixteenth, or early part of the seventeenth centuries. Here some slight difference

arose amongst the worthy individuals of our company.

Messieurs Marshall and Morrison, it seems, had an acquaintance—a Major somebody or other—who resided at the termination of a gloomy lane, between two hamlets hereabout; in a cottage, built, and fitted up, according to the most approved modern manner, with towers, embrasures, Gothic porch, and painted windows. This friend of theirs was represented by Mr. Marshall, to be a sad dog—only nobody's enemy but his own, and of matchless spirit and pleasantry: nothing, therefore, would suffice, but they must beat up his quarters, and introduce the baronet.

To this part of the plan, however, Sir Grey Carmichael objected, in terms the most peremptory. Although perhaps, in few points a more really respectable character, he had seen a great deal more of good society than the other two; and, judging of their intimate acquaintances by themselves, he naturally presumed that they



would be persons whose low, boisterous, and profligate manners, were not likely to be redeemed by any single quality capable of making them endurable.

He, therefore, refused flatly to go ; and the others, as pertinaciously refusing to give up their project—the party separated for a while ; and Sir Grey was left to a solitary stroll upon the bank of the river, in a meadow not even approached, at that moment, by any other human being.

Indeed, he appeared to feel the loneliness of his situation ; and to take advantage thereof, by indulging in a soliloquy, which he would not have ventured upon, unquestionably, had he conceived the possibility of being overheard.

“ Could I have believ'd,” said he, “ when I first came up to London, that I was destin'd for nothing better than to be the leading fool amongst such a crew of fools and blackguards as these ? I should be glad to know, what can possibly be got by it towards advancing any one object of mine,

in life—and what is to be the end of it all! Curse me, if I don't fancy I should have been a happier man, if I had gone on vegetating, at Cardicombe, with my old mother and sisters:—quintessence of all stupidity as I thought, (and do still think, for that matter,) both the place, and society. I have my doubts, too, at times—I don't know—confound it—there's an easy line to be drawn between the being an absolute puritan, and the scoffing, unnecessarily, at what so many agree to hold in reverence.—Not that one's afraid, about another world, and all that; whew! no: nor is my understanding to be govern'd by old women either in cassocks or petticoats:—but the length to which these silly fellows go, is not—eh—is not good taste.”

That last sentence he repeated, and dwelt upon, while he was pondering on a subject, which, in spite of himself, had harassed his mind through the whole day.

“By all that's strange,” he continued, “what happen'd to me last night, is the

most unaccountable thing——Could there be any trick, I wonder? I should like to catch either of them playing me such a one! But no: the supposition is inadmissible. It might indeed be fancy—people would say: though I should answer (who must know most about the matter), that it certainly was no such thing. I KNOW, it was not fancy; and there's an end on't. May I be cut short of thirty years of pleasure and enjoyment, and perish by the worst of deaths; if I do not make a further discovery, one way or other, this night. Why did I give any hints to that poor inferior creature, Morrison! He will be tormenting me with future questions; and one can never think of making a friend of him. I wish Redcliffe was here: 'twas solely for the sake of his company, that I ever belong'd to this fantastical club; and now he seldom comes near us: he's a man of some sense, and a gentleman besides: I should have satisfaction in talking this

business over with him—should like it particularly.”

He was here disturbed by symptoms of his companions' return, whose voices were plainly to be heard long before they themselves were to be seen.

It turned out, that they had overtaken their friend the Major's servant; and learnt from him, that all trouble in proceeding to the cottage would be lost—as his master had been in town for a week past.

On this information, they wheeled to the right-about; and had met, (it seemed,) as they trudged back again,—in one of those walks between rows of lofty limes peculiar to that part of the country—a pair of young ladies, whose personal attractions appeared to have made a prodigious impression upon them; and about whom, they raved, till Sir Grey Carmichael, glad to disguise the dejection of spirits under which he then laboured, and which he felt to be on the increase—took up the subject; ridiculed their admiration; and expressed such

incredulity, that, at length, a wager was proposed.

They were all to go back to the lime walk, and to trust in Sir Grey's word of honour that he would tell the truth: he having offered to lay four half-crowns to one, that, within the last three weeks, he had met with three girls, all more to be admired, than any whom Marshall and the other could point out to him. How the bet was decided, is of little or no consequence to the present story: it did fall out, however, that the baronet lost his wager; he, freely allowing, that not only three months, but three years, and much more, had elapsed, since he had seen, figure and face together, two such entirely lovely young women. Our sufficiently forward friends would have been well pleased, probably, to have excited some of their attention; but the only notice extended to them did not prove particularly flattering.

When they first passed by, the taller of the females was conversing,

with the most delightful and captivating animation; while the other seemed to be so completely occupied in listening, that the trio were no more attended to, than if they had been so many sheep: and when, on a second approach, the young ladies could not but perceive them; the elder of the two, audibly observed, that it was getting late; and they both, instantly, quitted the avenue.

Getting late, it certainly was. Scarcely a third part of the glowing and magnificent orb of the setting sun had been visible above the horizon, when our heroes left the meadows by the water-side, in order to settle their wager; and before they took boat again, the gloom of evening had made encroachments rapid and effective, even upon the splendid hues of the western sky. So that, by the time they re-landed at the stairs near that delectable house of entertainment, the Golden Crane—it had been totally dark for an hour and a half, at the very least.

Mr. Edward Marshall, not having altogether recovered his serenity of disposition since the adventure of the lower orders and the kettle; remained, for a while, behind the others, wrangling with the watermen; and, as his companions proceeded, Mr. Morrison remarked, that Sir G. Carmichael had chosen the longest way round, towards their tavern.

"Much it signifies, to be sure, which way we take," replied Sir Grey.

"After people have been on their legs so many hours as we have," said the other, "more especially while we were dawdling about in those eternal vistas and meadows opposite to the island there—it makes a good deal of difference, in my opinion, whether one goes home smack through the middle, or round two thirds of the circumference of a circle. What ails you, that you can't go by the jolly old Friar's Walk? You seem'd disinclined to leave that place in the morning——"

"On with you then—as you please,"

returned the baronet, walking straight up the lane in question, but taking care to keep the lead himself; and making such prodigious haste to get forward, that Mr. Morrison could scarcely keep up with him.

"Don't hurry so," cried Morrison. "Hark you, Carmichael; hark you, Sir Grey; I wish to speak with you—I do, upon my soul. Marshall's ever so far behind; and I want you to tell me a little more about what we were talking of, just as he came——plague seize your long legs; I cannot keep on at that pace," He began to run; and, for a moment, overtook the other.

"Did you seriously mean——? Do you hear, Carmichael? Do you hear me? Were you in earnest, when you said—— Oh, nonsense! What's the fun of posting on at this rate!" But Sir Grey had now cleared the lane; and, as the master and mistress of the house, with several more persons, were standing at the tavern-door—and as the illustrious Edward Marshall



joined them before they assembled in the sitting room—Mr. Morrison was fain to wave the gratification of his curiosity : a feeling, which the deportment of the baronet during the day, had raised to a pretty high pitch ; and which, his conduct since night-fall, had inflamed to a very uneasy one.

Mr. Marshall began to talk about a substantial supper, to be succeeded by another drinking bout ; Evans, the landlord, suggested no difficulties ; Morrison also was favourable ; but Carmichael gave a decided negative to the proposal.

“ Then, since we are not to eat or drink,” said Mr. Marshall, “ if you think to catch me sitting up here a minute longer, you are much mistaken.” So saying, he took his candle and departed.

The baronet likewise, laid his hand upon a flat candlestick. “ Stop, for one moment, Carmichael,” cried Mr. Morrison in a low voice—nearly a whisper—intended to be very impressive : “ were you serious, this

morning, when you assured me, that you would, once more, try——”

“ Good night,” replied Sir Grey; and was out of the room, before the other could stop him.

Sir Grey gained his chamber; put down the light; bolted the door; and looked round the room in every direction—behind the window-curtains, within the closet, under the bed, and every where: after which, he stood more than five minutes deep in thought; then turned round his head suddenly, as if he had heard somebody behind him.

He then produced pen and paper; and, with a look of desperation and defiance, drew blood from his own person; made the requisite marks on his forehead and on the paper; placed the charm, properly, under his pillow—and got into bed.

There was a river-carrier, whose boat went regularly from Teddington to London and back again, during each day—or rather, during each successive twelve

hours; for the state of the tide frequently compelled him to borrow a portion of the night: and it was known that this man would be forced to set out from town so extremely early, on the morning which, in the course of our narrative, we have just arrived at—that, according to the calculation of mine host Evans, he might be expected to pass the stairs below the Golden Crane, by half-past five o'clock.

Accordingly, the landlord was abroad before that time: not for the mere pleasure of seeing the water-carrier's boat go by; but because a considerable part of his cargo, that day, had been destined to increase the attractions of "the Crane."

Mr. Evans, when he first came down, tried the key of the main outer door of his house; and, for some moments, tried it in vain: but, if he was surprised that the bolt did not fall back so readily as usual; he was still more surprised at discovering the cause of the failure. Somebody, it

appeared, had been before-hand with him, and had unlocked the door already.

Old Evans paused; he feared he had been robbed : but as (if such were the case), the thief had certainly got clear off, by this time; he withstood his inclination to disturb the repose of his guests, as well as that of every body else in the house, by making such an uproar as had seldom been heard—and quietly pursued his way towards the water-side, down the alley called Friar Robert's Walk.

He had nearly reached the middle of the lane, when he heard a footstep; and, on casting his eyes upwards—beheld—though he could hardly believe those eyes—Sir Grey Carmichael before him, and advancing towards him.

Sir Grey, when he saw the other, seemed doubtful whether he should approach or not.

“ Can this be possible, sir ? ” said Evans, “ I'm a'most inclined to doubt my senses. You were here yesterday, too ; and near

about as early as it is now ; for I see you, in this quarter myself."

"What do you call yourself," said Sir Grey; and why is it necessary that you should meet me **HERE**—of all places?"

Evans surveyed him with attention and wonder. "When you have stared at me long enough," continued Carmichael, "I suppose, you will say—what——what—you have to say."

"I doubt, if you're quite well, Sir Grey——"

"May be not."

"Were you ever in habits, sir, of walking in your sleep?"

"I shall discover it yet," cried Carmichael, with unexpected vehemence. "I will see the end of it—happen what may."

"Don't you recollect me, sir?" said the landlord.

Sir Grey now drew himself up, like one whose observation is suddenly arrested; and he passed his hand, twice or thrice, across his eyes.

"I think I do," he replied. "Yes, yes, you are Evans;—to be sure you are. Were you not inquiring about my health? Faith, I scarce know what answer to give you. I was ill in the night——I do believe."

"Shouldn't you be better in doors, sir?"

"No, sir, I'm best where I am."

"You're not offended, I hope, Sir Grey. I was just going down to the river to look after Phillips's boat: and I thought—being afraid you were not right well, sir; that if you was just to step down there along with me, you see; why perhaps we might go back again to the house—you see—together, afterwards."

"And does it not occur to you, Mr. Evans, that I may, possibly, amuse myself as well, by taking a walk for my own pleasure, as by going to see—either your brandy and stuff landed, all among the rabble, at the—what-d'ye-call-'em stairs; or, by returning to that ill-ventilated old room at your house, for a matter of three

hours, before any of the other gentlemen will be stirring?"

Mr. Evans bowed gravely; and with a face expressive of high astonishment, not to add, a considerable share of perplexity and concern, went on about his business: while the young baronet employed himself, somehow or other, till after nine o'clock: in what manner, it is beyond us to say—excepting, that he did not remain long in the Friar's Walk: for he was not there, most assuredly, when Evans returned, by that way, with his goods.

Mr. Morrison, we may remember, had given a peculiar degree of weight to certain circumstances, all the day before; and had embraced (whether justly, or not) an opinion, that the mind of Sir Grey Carmichael was disturbed, notwithstanding all his endeavours to be lively, and to keep up his accustomed character. But the conclusion suggested at that time, as much, probably, by Morrison's imagination, as by any reasonable inference which he had a

fight to have drawn—was now forced upon the observation, not only of that individual, but of his friend Mr. Marshall likewise.

Sir Grey could not control his feelings: he strove, indeed, to do it; but so manifest was the effort, that it only served to render the cloud upon his spirits more constantly perceptible: at length, he seemed absolutely to sink down in despair, and allow free scope to the impressions which distressed him. At one moment, he would sit in stern abstraction of thought, without speaking a word to any body; and in the next, he grew querulous, restless, and irritable.

A cold northerly wind prevailed throughout that day—particularly cold, for the time of year; all idea of the water, therefore, was given up: and after each had suggested various schemes of amusement, to which the other only appeared to attend, for the purpose of objection—the Messieurs Marshall and Morrison found themselves lounging on in their general room, at four



in the afternoon; without having done any one thing upon the face of the earth.

"I hate these raw summer days," observed Morrison, "one never knows whether to light a fire or not."

"Confoundedly disagreeable, I admit," said his companion; "and I don't say, but my remark might be extended to our expedition here, altogether: I am not one of those who can fancy myself pleased, merely because I've come out of London to join a party at a devilish bad, stupid kind of inn, on the look-out for amusement."

"Nor I, by Jove," cried Morrison. "The fact is, that when any of us have met, at this place;—every one should do his utmost."

"No doubt, he should," replied the other. "Now I'll let you into one of my notions. That fellow Carmichael, sir, has been spoilt by our club—hang me, if he hasn't. He gives himself airs; he assumes a tone of superiority; and just follows his own humours, let who will be in company.

Look at him to-day, for instance! What the plague has possessed him all this morning! Did you ever see such a sulky hound?"

"I have a pretty strong suspicion," said Mr. Morrison, rising from his chair, and speaking, as if he whispered into his friend's ear, though nobody else was in the room, "that I could furnish a hint or two, which might tend to explain his tantarums."

Marshall stared inquisitively.

"You remember," continued Mr. Morrison, "the bloody cross, and all that business—the charm, you know, which he was to put under his pillow."

"The bloody—what? Ah, yes;—the fun of the night before last: but you do not mean to say—you can't mean to say—even you—though I know you, Morrison; I know your head to be, as full of old women's stories, as that of any boor in Germany——"

"Upon my life and honour," said Mr.

Morrison, "I as much believe Carmichael's odd behaviour to have been caused, in some way or other, by what I mentioned to you—as that I see you now before me."

Mr. Marshall here, burst out into an overpowering horse-laugh; which, however, sunk very considerably in tone, on the entrance of Sir Grey Carmichael, looking so much out of sorts, that nobody ventured to prolong the conversation; nor did any thing more pass between them which could be called conversation; 'till they had all dined, and swallowed above a quart of wine apiece: for, this evening, the baronet appeared to be as little disposed to shun the bottle, as the others—if there was any difference, rather less.

"'Tis miraculous to me," said Morrison, "that old Sir Hugh"—(as they sometimes called the landlord of the house)—"should not light upon better Port now and then—if 'twas merely by accident."

"Prithee, don't. Do not let us have that eternal strain, this evening too," re-

replied Sir Grey Carmichael. "I doubt much, Mr. Morrison, whether some of the members of our club would be so forward to complain of this wine, any where else."

"I should hope, Sir Grey," said Morrison, "that I know good wine from bad, as well as yourself."

"Better, I dare say," he replied, with a smile of contempt.

"Now, according to my idea, that's confounded arrogance," said Mr. Marshall, not however, in a loud voice at all; nor is it clear that he was overheard.

"The truth is, Carmichael," observed Morrison; "you have not been yourself, for these two days: you have no equal, when you're in trim—and I tell you so, to your face. But surely, when people meet, on a party of pleasure like this—every man ought to do his best; and to force himself into spirits—which he easily may."

"Generally speaking, I believe he may," returned the baronet. "If I said any

thing harsh to you, Morrison, I am sorry, really."

"No, not at all: don't suppose it," replied the other.

"No more sneers, then, and no more apologies," cried Mr. Marshall. Joviality's the word for to-night, my choice ones!"—  
(*Singing.*)

*"At the hunter's return, when Gay Bac-  
chus he ——"*

"What's next, Sir Grey? I say—we'll have done with all raw-head and bloody-bones' experiments: we'll have nothing more to do with spells, conjurations, and epistles to Satan, tucked under our bolsters: we won't terrify ourselves, to-night, with tales that would be laughed to scorn by half the children in London!"

"Great, as your vulgar assurance is, sir," said Carmichael, changing colour, and speaking thick with passion; "it can hardly lead you into the presumption of supposing that you may make me your butt."

"Neither must you, master Baronet, take the crotchet into your head—that you are to brow-beat me."

"I have no desire to quarrel," rejoined Sir Grey; "but what you said, was intended to be offensive; and was offensive. Let it not be repeated."

"I shall say the same again, if I think proper; either here, or in any other place."

"To repeat it HERE, sir, will be quite sufficient," cried Carmichael, getting up from the table, and moving round towards him.

"The man is distracted, to be sure," said Mr. Morrison, who now rose also, in order to interpose.

"I shall take another time, to talk this affair over," observed Mr. Marshall.

"Not you," said Carmichael; "you will never do your part: though I might be willing to let you appear as a gentleman, for once." With those words, he left the room; to which he did not return all through the evening.

There seems to be no necessity for following up the dialogue which ensued upon his departure. Marshall raged and blustered, and the other talked mysteriously, as long as Carmichael formed the substance of their discourse; after that, we are not aware what became of them, or whether they had any discourse at all. They were, certainly, up late, however, dull as they might have found each other—and Morrison, the latest: as he remained below, for a long time after the other gentleman had betaken himself to his slumbers.

Mr. Morrison had not been left alone in the sitting room, many minutes, before the consideration of Sir Grey Carmichael's unaccountable freaks, his state of gloom, and his sallies of passion, returned to his mind, with all the former interest and awe which he had felt upon that subject.

While he reflected on the increased dejection with which that day, and the preceding night, appeared to have affected

his friend—the hours either passed like minutes, or, unknown to himself, he dropped asleep; for, when he looked at his watch, it was nearly down, and pointed to the half hour after two.

He felt an uncontrollable desire to ascertain whether Carmichael had renewed the very foolish experiment which Mr. Morrison suspected—and, as we have seen—rightly suspected him to have persevered in, for the two preceding nights: and so intense did that desire become, that he more than half determined to look into the baronet's room; take the chance of his being asleep; and discover, whether, that night also, he had gone through all the profanely silly operations of the charm. Although he full well knew, that if Sir Grey should happen not to be asleep, his anger might be productive of no slight inconveniences.

Morrison hesitated: he first left the room with a candle; then, fearing lest the introduction of a fresh light should disturb



the other—he determined to reconnoitre, without one: not being, by any means, certain, all this time, whether Sir Grey slept with a light in his room, or not—but hoping that he did.

He stole up stairs, therefore, in total darkness; and having stopped at the right bed-room door—he thought he heard some talking within.

Mr. Morrison trembled from hand to foot, as he stood, catching at every sound; but he did not continue to stand there long; for he now, not only heard the voice of his friend the baronet, speaking in a very unusual tone—(a tone, which gave Morrison the impression of his being, at that moment, under the endurance of great distress)—but he was likewise, soon convinced, that Sir Grey had got out of bed; and that he, and perhaps somebody else, were actually walking about the chamber. But whoever, and whatever these persons were, they seemed to be approaching the door; a movement which

caused the listener's instant and precipitate retreat.

Mr. Morrison regained his candle, which he had left on the landing-place; and made the best of his way to his own room, quite at another part of the house. He got to bed forthwith; that was easy enough; but, to get to sleep, after this adventure—he did not find altogether so practicable.

He was, what is commonly called, flurried; and rendered so nervous, that a fluttering partial flame in his grate, produced by two or three live coals which had not been raked out—annoyed him excessively, and completely destroyed his rest.

He thought of Sir Grey Carmichael, with a shudder. He reflected, with no perfect complacency, upon the part taken by himself, in the conversation which had been the original cause, apparently, of all his eccentricities, and disturbance of mind: and he fancied, every now and then, that he saw Carmichael come softly into the room,

light-headed, and walking in his sleep. Then, he would pull the bed-clothes over his own face ; but growing uneasy, in that situation, he was forced, once more, to raise his head : and while congratulating himself, at last, on the complete extinction of the fire—again shot up the little tormenting flame, and renewed all his disquiet. Whether he got any sleep whatever, seems doubtful; certain it is, that he did not get much.

Before Mr. Morrison was dressed, next morning, Evans, the landlord, came into his room; and with considerable freedom, not only of manner, but expression, remonstrated with him upon the late hours which he had kept : particularly observing, on his having continued to run all about the house, up stairs and down stairs, to the alarm of the family, after every one else had been in bed for hours. He then expatiated on the respectability of his house; and concluded with inquiring for the direction to a certain Mr. Redcliffe, whom we have adverted to, more than once, already.

Morrison felt jealous of this; and asked, with some petulance, whether Mr. Redcliffe and Sir Grey Carmichael were the only members of a club which had so long honoured his tavern. But old Evans seemed to feel very little abashed; and, without any kind of apology, proceeded to state his opinion, that nobody but Mr. Redcliffe would have any influence over Sir Grey; whom he suspected either to have involved himself in some serious and alarming scrape, or to have injured his health, or both put together: adding, that if the baronet were not decidedly out of his mind, at that moment — he had never seen an insane person in his life. This discourse shocked Morrison excessively; and even affected Mr. Marshall, when he heard of it on coming down to breakfast; the more particularly, as they were then informed, that Sir Grey had paid his bill, and left the Golden Crane, above an hour before.

But Marshall was not the sort of man to dwell long upon such an occurrence:

and Morrison, though sufficiently weak and visionary as well as profligate, had not a mind susceptible of any deep impressions.

Amusement and dissipation, therefore, with an ostensible share of business, to which he was obliged, in some measure, to attend, pretty speedily relieved him from every unpleasant remembrance of the late meeting at the Crane :—though, whether Sir Grey Carmichael himself got over the impression of this affair with equal facility, may be a matter of just doubt.

Several months had now passed away, without any communication between the members of this famous club ; and winter was advancing apace ; when a young gentleman who had delayed a tour in Scotland 'till rather too late in the year, happened to be taken ill, on his return from thence, and to be laid up, for about three weeks, in an indifferent inn, at Tadcaster, near York. On the morning of November the twenty-ninth, the waiter made his appear-

ance, uncalled for, in this gentleman's room.

"Mr. Hardyman sends his duty, sir," said the waiter, "he's very glad you're so much better, sir; and he supposes if so be you keep your strength 'till to-morrow—you'll be for moving from this to York."

"You may tell Mr. Hardyman," replied the invalid, "that I am well satisfied with him, and with the attentions of every body belonging to him; and that, when I feel myself able to leave his house—it will be, for the purpose of travelling southward altogether; and not of going to York. What have you got in your hand there?"

"Letter for you, sir."

"Only one letter?"

"Only one, sir."

"My friends, I think, have borne my sickness and imprisonment here, wonderfully well; without making many efforts to divert, or even inquire after me! Very good: you may leave it." The waiter retired; and the young man opening his

letter, read therein, as follows—the date being “Alchester, Nov. 26. 1800.”

“MY DEAR REDCLIFFE,

I'M afraid you have been seriously ill: I only heard of your state, both of body, and locality, the day before yesterday; or, I do assure you, I would have written before—I would, upon my soul. Of all men living, I've been wanting to write to you, for ever so long; and yet, one can never, somehow, say in writing the half of what one has to say. I wish'd to talk—among other things, about that ridiculous club of ours, held at the old house just above the river, you know—near Battersea. I attended there, with a small party, last July; but it was peculiarly unsatisfactory, in many respects. In the first place, the people one generally meets on those occasions, are not gentlemen—that's the fact: you and I, I'm afraid, are not so well entitled to complain of their profligacy; but—confound the thing! it is such devilish low

profligacy! since the hour I was born, I never have been so much astonish'd and perplex'd—aye, and worse than either of those feelings—if I chose to describe every thing; as by a certain circumstance, that—— By the by—why the deuce did you call the lane leading from Evans's to the water side, Friar Robert's Walk?—but no matter now; we shall soon meet, I hope. I have been reading 'Les Egaremens de l'Amour;' and, in defiance of the universal judgment of mankind, must frankly admit, that I am not in love with Sophie. A general description of a beautiful woman, goes for nothing; and when you come to particulars—those perfect features, with her light eyes, and her fair hair and skin—never could have bewitch'd me, I am confident: besides which, her naïvetés and etourderies do not strike one as natural heedlessness—but as a kind of selfish cunning; the strongest proof of which is, that in every instance, they make rather for the gratification of her own vanity, than



against it. Then, in what class of heroes would you place M. De Beaudouin? Not among the old school; I'll answer for that—if he doesn't put me in mind of some of the fellows belonging to our club, I'm a Turk. My dear Redcliffe, talking of the club—I write in haste; I never look over what I have written, a second time; and forget, whether I asked, if 'twas really you, who first call'd that alley leading from the Golden Crane down to the river, Friar Robert's Walk? Do you know any particular history about that lane? for they all attribute the name to you. Upon my word, they do. I could tell you something inconceivably odd, if we had a fit opportunity; but as I have written a longer letter already, than I've been guilty of, for this twelve-month and more; I shall now conclude, in the old style, by assuring you of the good wishes, esteem, respect, and veneration, in which you are held by him, who has the honour to be, &c. &c. &c.

“ GREY CARMICHAEL.”

(P. S.) “ Come—I will make you a fair proposal: you are getting well, by this time, I take for granted—and will soon be on your march towards London. Just let me have a line, to tell me the day; and never trust me, if I don't give you a meeting at Baldock: where, we must pass the whole evening together—for, as I told you before, I have something to say, rather—indeed a great deal—out of the common way.”

Mr. Redcliffe's health, in an improving state when he received this letter, continued to improve, every hour: he wrote an early answer; fixed on a day for their interview at Baldock; and duly repaired thither, at the time specified.

Instead of finding his friend the baronet, however, a short note was delivered to him, in which Sir Grey attempted to laugh off his own breach of their engagement; declaring, that he never could keep an appointment in his life; and apparently endeavouring to

make light of the hints contained in his former letter. The truth being, probably, that he had succeeded better, of late, in his efforts to banish the subject from his thoughts, and did not wish to renew it by conversation.

Through a concurrence of accidents, these two friends saw nothing of each other 'till the first meeting of their club, at the latter end of May, in the subsequent year : by which period, the bustle, business, petty vexations, and doubtful pleasures of the winter and spring, had pretty much relieved the mind of the baronet—(not from all recollection, certainly ; that would have been impossible)—but from all very strong recollection of any thing unpleasant, connected with that place, and party.

There was a tolerably good attendance on the day we are speaking of: some casualty, indeed, prevented Mr. Marshall from coming ; but Mr. Morrison was there ; and though he perfectly remembered former occurrences,—any allusion to them, might,

(he thought), be offensive to Sir Grey Carmichael; and he consequently abstained altogether from that topic. Sir Grey arrived barely in time for dinner; he shook hands, heartily, with every body around him; and expressed himself peculiarly delighted to see his friend Redcliffe again. Mr. Redcliffe's reception of him, on the other hand, was not quite so warm: it could not be said to be uncivil indeed—nor even unaffectionate—as far as words went; but whether there was not a degree of reserve amounting to coldness, in his manner, Sir Grey doubted: he thought too, that he detected a latent smile upon Redcliffe's countenance, which must mean something, but could not mean perfect cordiality. While these things passed over his mind, the dinner was brought in; but he and Mr. Redcliffe did not sit next to each other.

In the course of the meal, Sir Grey frequently adverted to his particular friend—asked the other to drink with him, more

than once—and showed those small attentions, which prove good will, and a disposition to keep up intimacy: the whole of which overtures, seemed to be received in the same spirit with which they were offered.

We are afraid, however, that the general habits and principles of this society, had undergone no material change, since the meeting of the year before: they drank as deeply, and they talked, in all ways, as sillily, as freely, and as improperly.

During a pause in the discourse, which followed a story so told as to excite universal clamorous mirth,—a certain Mr. John Netherwood, half in jest, half in earnest, accused Sir Grey Carmichael of caprice, and insolence in his deportment, towards his friends.

“And I should not so much complain of you,” he added, laughing,—“in London; where I am ready to suppose you a great person, and a man of fashion, and so on: but where’s the fun of playing off your airs

at the expense of the members of this club —on a club-day, too—and just in front of the Crane, here !”

“ I don't know what you are at,” returned the baronet ; “ I have not a conception, what you mean.”

“ The devil ! you haven't ? did you not pass me, scarcely ten minutes before dinner-time, as close as I am to Jemmy Morrison now ;—without speaking or noticing me, more than if I had been a cockchafer upon the hedge ?”

“ No,” replied Carmichael, in a stern loud voice.

“ That's good, faith !” cried the other, looking at Mr. Redcliffe significantly, and laughing.

“ Where might this happen, sir ?” said the baronet.

“ In what we call the Friar's Walk, hard by.”

“ 'Tis false,” said Sir Grey : “ upon my honour, as a gentleman — it is a falsehood.”

“Nay, nay, Carmichael,” cried Mr. Redcliffe, who here could contain himself no longer—“the thing was of no consequence whatever; and might very well have been pass’d off as a joke: but I must tell you, now—that you are behaving very unworthily: you are in the wrong, Carmichael.”

“And do you mean to side with them against me?” Sir Grey replied, with a lowered voice, having turned so pale as to attract every body’s notice.—“Let me speak a word with you, Redcliffe, in another room.”

This measure was vehemently deprecated by the rest. “Do be quiet. We have no design to quarrel,” cried Sir Grey Carmichael. “I have no such design, I can tell you,” said Mr. Redcliffe; “and must therefore request Sir Grey to sit still for the present, and consider calmly, whether he has not ventured upon a rash assertion himself, as well as spoken most unbecomingly to Mr. Netherwood. I am

sure, Carmichael, you will soon do him justice ; I am positive you will."

Sir Grey made no answer, and shortly afterwards left the room.

He had no sooner shut the door, than Mr. Morrison observed, that he hoped no person present would think deeply of any thing which the gentleman who had just gone out, either had said, or might say ; for the course of events that evening had only served to convince him that Sir Grey was disturbed in his understanding, which suspicion (he added) had forced itself upon him, for a good while past, to his very sincere concern.

Mr. Redcliffe, on hearing this, asked him if he had been present when Sir Grey made one of the party, at that house, during the July of the year preceding. " For there was a meeting," said he, to " which a certain letter, sent by Carmichael to me in Yorkshire, alluded, more than once ; and, as I thought, in terms strange enough. Pray did any thing out



of the common way happen to him at that particular time?"

The other did not hear the question—or perhaps, would not hear it: for, instead of a direct reply, he suggested the possibility of Mr. Netherwood having been mistaken, when he imagined that he had met Carmichael in the Friar's Walk, that very day. But the supposition was scouted by the former gentleman, with vehemence and positiveness.

"That matter need admit of no doubt," added Mr. Redcliffe: "and indeed, if you require further evidence that he was thereabouts, this afternoon, I give you my word—I also saw him nearly at the same time, and in the same place. He treated me, I must own, pretty much as he did Netherwood; and though I consider'd it beneath one, to make any comment upon such behaviour—yet, feeling his rude way of passing by, and slighting me, to be an offensive caprice—it is not improbable, but my sub-

sequent manner towards him, may have shown as much. I remark, however, Morrison—that you seem in no hurry to favour me with any information upon what I regard as the most essent——”

At this moment, a message was brought to Mr. Redcliff, importing, that Sir Grey Carmichael begged earnestly to speak with him. He accordingly went into another room; where he found his friend walking about in the utmost perturbation of mind. Sir Grey locked the door, but continued to pace the room for a considerable time longer; without speaking himself or attending to a word that the other said: at length, he threw himself into a chair; and observed —“ Something very serious is about to befall me.”

“ I am afraid you are unwell, indeed,” returned Redcliffe; “ but do not suffer yourself to be the slave of fancy.”

“ Within these ten minutes,” proceeded Carmichael, “ I have been in the lane just

by here: the walk—you recollect—which they were speaking of—and, as I hope to prosper, that was the only time in which I have set foot there, throughout this whole day.”

“My dear Carmichael, you seem to labour under some delusive impression. Take a turn with me into the air: you will be better by and by.”

Sir Grey, for a minute or more, held his head down, and concealed his face: then suddenly assuming a lively manner, which was quite out of place, and unnatural —“Did I ever tell you what I dreamt—or———what I saw, here—in this house, last year—for three nights running?”

“Pshaw!” cried the other.

“I saw something, or somebody, (I swear to you)—who persuaded me—and I have never been able to get it entirely out of my head since—that my evil angel was to appear to me, in the place which you, all of you, call Friar Robert’s Walk.” With this, he burst out a laughing; and his

laugh discomposed, and even terrified, Redcliffe.

“Mind me now: mind what I’m going to tell you,” continued Sir Grey. “After my vision, or dream, or whatever it was—I have repeatedly been in that lane; but never saw any thing particular there, ’till this evening—when, may I be devoted to perdition, this moment—if I did not meet MY OWN SELF.”

“Do let me advise you to lie down upon your bed,” said Mr. Redcliffe.

“Not a bit of it: no such thing. Bed! What the fiend, d’ye mean? Have with you, my bucks, bloods, and jovial, comrades all—I’m coming back to join the honourable sitting.

“That, upon my life, you shall not do,” replied Redcliffe, struggling with him.

“Stop then; hands off,” cried the baronet, “we will come to terms. I sha’n’t go to bed; that’s positive: but perhaps, I may promise you to sit quiet by this fire—if you will return here, without fail, and

join me again, whenever you can get away from those fellows."

To this proposal, Mr. Redcliffe agreed; and went back to the other men of the club: although not till after he had lain a personal injunction on old Evans, the landlord, to keep his eye upon the room where Sir Grey Carmichael was sitting.

How long Mr. Redcliffe continued to drink with the rest, we never heard exactly: his spirits were sadly affected; and he had great difficulty in silencing the inquisitiveness with which he was pestered, and in accounting, or inventing an excuse for his friend's absence.

It grew late, however, and they called for candles. The boy who brought them, lingered in the room; approached the back of Redcliffe's chair, and whispered in his ear, that Mr. Evans felt sorry about it—very much vexed indeed—but that Sir Grey Carmichael was missing; and how he had got out of the room, nobody knew the least in the world.

With a hearty imprecation upon Evans, for his carelessness, Mr. Redcliffe seized his hat; he rushed out; looked hastily immediately round the house—and began shouting, whooping, and calling upon Carmichael by name, louder and louder, in every quarter adjoining. But his call was never replied to; and the evening had grown so dark, by this time, that he could not see six yards before him, in any direction.

He ran, this way, and that way; and found himself at the top of the Friar's Walk, before he recollected, with a painful sensation, and sudden thrill of horror, the last words which Sir Grey had spoken to him, relating to that spot.

"He may, possibly, be somewhere here," said Redcliffe to himself, as he entered the lane—"I am sure he's deranged; and the delusion may have led him, where, as he conceives—Holla! Ho! Confusion seize me! Who, or what, is this?"

He had stumbled over something, and

was himself thrown down on the further side of a man who lay upon the ground; and as if this occurrence, in his present state of mind, had not been enough to disconcert him—on rising again, he laid his hand accidentally over that of the other person—and found it, cold as clay.

When Mr. Redcliffe could, once more, command his powers of utterance, which did not happen very soon—he shouted for help; and was heard, almost immediately, by one of the stage coachmen, as he went round the western end of the house towards the stable, with a lantern in his hand.

This man communicated the alarm to others; and a considerable number of people, among whom were some gentlemen of the club, came up quickly to the place; where Mr. Redcliffe, himself looking like a corpse, and nearly bereft of his understanding, stood over the body—the totally dead body—of Sir Grey Carmichael.

Every thing was put in practice, every conceivable experiment was made, towards

restoring the powers of animation to this unfortunate and misguided young man; the manner and cause of whose death they never could comprehend, or suggest the least plausible explanation of;—but without the shadow of success, or even hope.

The only effect that we ever knew to have been produced by this truly shocking catastrophe (besides creating a subject for eternal gossip, in that part of the country), was the abandonment of his house of public resort, by Mr. Rees Evans; who announced, that so mysterious a circumstance, in addition to what had been circulated already about the habits of the club—had determined him to give up a concern, which must now—however unjustly—suffer in some measure, from idle and malignant rumours. At the same time, we are bound, in fairness, to mention, what others said of his retreat; which was, that having feathered his nest,



he had long meant to give up business, on the first fitting opportunity.

As these premises ceased, henceforward, to be used for a tavern, the name of the Golden Crane was heard no more; but the house still stands, or did so in the autumn of 1821; at which time, we believe, it had been converted into a boarding school.

In our anti-miraculous age, people are apt to be clamorous for the elucidation of any very extraordinary event in a story; and we heartily wish that we had a satisfactory explanation to offer of this. But after trying to account suitably for things, and to make them out NATURALLY, by the introduction of new characters, such as crazy old beggars, dwarfs both male and female, shrewd idiots, and rope-dancers—we found our talents utterly unequal to the undertaking, and were obliged simply to relate the circumstances as they were delivered to us.

Nobody, however, intends to affirm

that any thing happened which ~~was~~ really supernatural; neither are we averse to further the gratification of reasonable curiosity, as far as lies in our power; but that power is limited by various considerations. This much are we allowed to say, and nothing more.

A certain Mrs. Millicent Booth, a decent, middle-aged, industrious woman, may be met with, any day, at her lodgings, in an obscure narrow street, of which we forget the name, in the Tower Hamlets—somewhere between East Smithfield and the Commercial Road. Her room is up four pair of stairs, above a cheesemonger's shop; and the door is—not that immediately upon your right, but the one facing you, when you get to the top landing place.

This Mrs. Booth can throw much more light upon our story—if she thinks proper.

## THE RED MAN

OF

NAGY RETSKY.

EARLY in the — century, at a period so ancient that it would be utterly impossible for any body to describe the manners of the times, Conrad of —, as is well known, was crowned Emperor of the West, at Rome. He was crowned and anointed by Pope Innocent the —th; in presence, among other chiefs and potentates, of the great Feodor of Langensalza. The stay of the Emperor at Rome, after this august ceremony, was but brief; but he stayed long enough to disgrace one of his former favourites; and Conrad took care, when he banished him the court, that all should

understand, that, if he escaped confinement in a dungeon for life, it was solely owing to his own regard for other members of the culprit's house. The name of this fallen favourite was Sir Woldemar de Zissersdorf, a young man of a noble—aye, truly, of the noblest among the families of Franconia; in addition to which advantage, he was graced, by nature, with a well-proportioned and elegant form, an engaging countenance, and, if not great talents, acuteness sufficient to have ensured him all the consequence and consideration to which he appeared to be born. And such distinction Sir Woldemar's art, shrewdness, and address, did procure for him, far longer than he deserved to enjoy it. For, intoxicated with success, vain of his natural gifts, and over-rating them, great as they were; devoted to pleasure, and panting for, he knew not what additional gratifications; he had not only expended all his own resources, and exacted much from his family, but had been guilty of some petulant and

daring offences against the highest authorities, which could no longer be overlooked. Indeed, the enormity of these offences was heightened and inflamed by his own unruly tongue, which, with a flippancy called wit, by his flatterers, and made the utmost of by his enemies, in their never-failing reports of him—had lavished ridicule, the most offensive, upon the courts of both the Emperor and Pontiff: upon Pope, Cardinals, German Grandees, and even the illustrious Conrad himself.

A decree of banishment, determined on in a moment of indignation, and expressed in suitable terms of bitterness, was forthwith issued against this young noble: nor did the decree leave to his choice the place of his exile;—far from it. Under penalty of loss of life, was he forbidden to return to Franconia, his native country; or to quit the territory of the empire; or, in truth, to reside any where, but in a wild and savage district, called the Forest of Nagy Retsky, in, or near to the centre

of the White Mountains, on the confines of Hungary and Moravia.

There was he sentenced to take up his abode; with assurances that he would be duly looked after, to prevent his escape; that his re-capture, if he did escape, would be followed by inevitable death; and, to make all more sure, he had orders to show himself before one of the imperial rangers of the forest, twice, within every ten days of his banishment. Sir Woldemar bore this disgrace, in public, with a haughty aspect, and unshaken demeanour. But within his own dwelling, he allowed more latitude to his feelings; he raved; he dashed his head, ~~liberally~~, against the wall; he cursed the day that ever brought him into the world; and some of his menials affirmed—(but not till after he had quitted Rome without satisfying all their unreasonable and avaricious demands)—that he had actually shed tears of disappointment and anguish.

To say the truth, sufficient evils now

pressed him, to have disconcerted any man; much more one, who had been habituated to voluptuousness, from his earliest age. He was to set out, within thirty-six hours, for the frightful wilderness of Nagy Retsky; but no provision whatever had been made for his sustenance when there: his finances were worse than exhausted; he resolved not to submit any petition to the Emperor; and no resource, therefore, remained, but the attempt to obtain a small supply from the kindness of three of his most intimate companions, who had formerly been eager and proud to style themselves his friends. From the first of these, the Baron Von Eisenstadt, he entertained hopes of success, inasmuch as that nobleman had been mainly instrumental to his ruin, by play—a circumstance, which he knew—which he had often heard, at least—that the baron had seriously lamented to a mutual friend of theirs; observing, at the same time, that he could not remit what he had won; be-

ing well aware, how offensive such a mere suggestion would be, to the fiery spirit of Sir Woldemar de Zissersdorf.

To the baron, therefore, Sir Woldemar applied, and received a most sincere and candid answer from that man of high connexion, and unblemished descent.

“ I shall not lie to you,” said the baron, “ as many others in my situation probably would, by affirming that I have lately sustained such a run of ill fortune as must prevent me from doing you the service that you require; on the contrary, I will be of real service to you, by giving you a piece of information, which, in the event, you may find more valuable than a temporary supply of coin. Know then, that we, who stake the whole means of preserving our rank and splendour upon games of chance—consider ourselves, to a certain degree, as at war with all mankind; and must give the enemy no possibility of advantage over us. That I could spare you what you require, is perfectly true:



but then there are a variety of others, from whom I have benefited equally, at the least, with yourself. Now, were I to assist you, be your need what it may, I must likewise assist them; and that, you will have the good sense to perceive, would be, to render abortive the labour of months."

The Baron Von Eisenstadt, luckily for his auditor, turned upon his heel, and was several yards off, before Sir Woldemar could forfeit his own life, by cutting him down to the ground, upon the spot—as he had laid his hand on his sword-hilt, in full inclination to do.

After this repulse, the unhappy member of the house of Zissersdorf bethought him of a cavalier celebrated for his deeds of arms, whose experienced valour had secured him so general a reception amongst the great ones of the land, as, even in that age, might have been denied to his behaviour; for his manners, it must fairly be admitted, were brutal in the extrême.

This doughty knight (Sir Maurus of Blankenberg was his appellation,) had not only signalized himself against his sovereign's foes; but in the private encounters which so abundantly marked that period, he had caused himself to be dreaded, admired, envied, and cordially detested.

To Sir Maurus of Blankenberg did Zissersdorf therefore apply, for the same favour that he had asked of the Baron Von Eisenstadt: and this was the answer transmitted to him by that warrior, through the mouth of his Esquire.

“I know you not. If you were ever possessed of any distinction acknowledged by Germans, that distinction hath been forfeited. I am informed,—but fortunately for thee, the information was not received prior to thy well-merited disgrace—that, among others of your superiors whom your vile tongue hath calumniated, you have dared to make free with the name of Blankenberg. But thou art safe, in being deemed unworthy of my sword.”

Sir Woldemar, for a full half hour after the delivery of this message, conducted himself like a madman: and no wonder; for he really was as much out of his senses as any demoniac.

When he began to recollect himself, he sent a defiance to Sir Maurus, in terms not unworthy of the provocation that he had received. He called him a brute-beast, an ungrateful miscreant, a base time-server, and a poltroon; and concluded, by challenging him to a decisive meeting in the Nagy Retsky Forest. Of this defiance no notice was taken by Sir Maurus of Blankenberg; nor did he ever (it is said) repair to the forest: for although he, unquestionably, would have encountered Sir Woldemar promptly enough, had the Emperor and all his court been spectators of the conflict; he probably thought, that, as matters were now situated, he had nothing to gain, and every thing to lose, by the measure proposed.

Such was the termination of the second

endeavour to obtain a little relief: and the unfortunate Sir Woldemar, being compelled to leave Rome before noon, on the following day, at first resolved, with deep denunciations against the whole human race, to make no further attempt upon the kindness of any one. But unless he could carry something of value with him into exile, he saw clearly, that he must be starved, notwithstanding the miraculous adventures which, at that time, found such ready credence; and in so very unpleasant a dilemma, he was reduced, once more, to try another companion of his former pleasure, the gay and brilliant Ernest of Mariendahl.

This young man had certainly been obliged to Woldemar, and perhaps, in an equal degree with the other two: but from him, Sir Woldemar hoped or expected very little. He doubted his former assurances of regard, as too warmly expressed to be genuine, and suspected that even his courage—the great virtue of the day, as

society was then constituted), would be found but barely sufficient to maintain him a character amongst his fellows. He could think of nobody else, however, on whom he had any kind of claim, and to Ernest of Mariendahl he consequently preferred the same request that he had made to the others.

Ernest returned him a verbal answer, and deputed a female dependent to deliver the same, purposely avoiding to send any of his ordinary followers to Zissersdorf, that he might conceal the circumstance of any intercourse having passed between them. But that verbal answer was accompanied by a small leathern bag, which the maiden presented to him, and thus expressed herself: "My orders, Sir Knight, are to say this much, in behalf of my Lord Ernest of Mariendahl. 'You look to me—not for more aid than it becomes me to give you; but for more, I fear, than I am enabled to give you. Howbeit, what

I have, I send: and, believe me, I can spare it ill enough.”

Sir Woldemar, on examining the bag, discovered the supply to be so far greater than he had counted upon, that, in an ecstasy of gratitude, he returned his most fervent acknowledgments, with an assurance of his determination to thank his friend, in person, before he quitted Rome. But upon this laudable resolution, the prudent Ernest laid his veto, as soon as he heard of it: he deprecated the step with vehemence, and besought Zissersdorf, by every motive of gratitude, if he really felt any, to keep scrupulously away from him, and even avoid the very quarter of the city in which he dwelt.

Next day, in conformity to his sentence, Sir Woldemar of Zissersdorf made a long adieu to Rome, to pomp, to intercourse with princes, and rivalry with the noblest; and, desponding in prospects, but unchanged in heart, he took his way toward the North of Italy.

“ Were all my friends disposed to serve me, like thee, through either worldly state,” said he, aloud, to the gallant courser which he bestrode; “ this change of fortune would, by Woldemar, be as little regarded, as a change of the seasons.”

In reflexions such as these, only varied occasionally, from half moralizing in pensive mood, to fits of deadly passion, sometimes rankling within his breast, sometimes vented in loud and furious raving, when he bethought him of perfidious friends and triumphant enemies—did Zissersdorf employ the journies of several days successively. As may naturally be imagined, he was in no haste to arrive at the scene of his destination; and, the exact time having been fixed for his appearance among the White Mountains, he so contrived, as not to reach the forest, till within nine or ten hours of the term prescribed to him. Not but that, for his own comfort and pleasure, he might as well have been there, as on his progress thither. Cities, in which his former magnificence had been displayed,

he cautiously avoided: open villages, where refreshment might, at all times, be procured, had, in those days, no existence; and frequently, without having tasted food, or been sheltered by a roof over his head, for more than twenty hours together — he passed the castle of many a chieftain, whose gates, a few weeks before, would almost have been rent from their hinges, to welcome him with due hospitality and honour.

Many scenes of desolation, dreary wilds, stony mountains, black treacherous morasses, and plains apparently interminable, presented themselves in vain to the notice of Sir Woldemar. Nothing could effectually rouse him from his melancholy musings. Reckless of his future fate, he heeded not danger, though his course led him through dangers of every description. Twice he traversed a narrow and terrific pass, where a perpendicular cliff closed him in on the one hand, and a more tremendous precipice on the other, with a torrent roaring beneath: while groups of



out-laws, the most notorious in the Italian states, were preparing their meals, and reposing themselves, after fatigue, beneath the rock which formed a barrier to his path. But the brigands, either, at that moment, indisposed for exertion, or confounded by his undaunted demeanor, and the wild ferocious glance—like the look of insanity—which he cast upon them—stared on him in silence, and suffered him to proceed unmolested.

The nights—though summer had not terminated, or, indeed, made great advances, when Woldemar of Zissersdorf undertook this compulsory journey,—were bleak, in these thinly-inhabited and barren regions, and often tempestuous. But, had they been much more severe, the retrospect which tortured Sir Woldemar, and excited him to a state of fever, both in mind and body, would have ensured his total disregard of cold, and every inconvenience.

At length, he approached the confines of Moravia. During a progress of nearly

thirty leagues, he had been crossing one desolate waste; and it was not till towards evening, that he entered the mountainous tract which, for many hours, he had been contemplating as his final seat of banishment: a desert, and a sort of grave upon earth.

Sir Woldemar more than half encircled the base of a lofty hill; and after crossing the skirts of several others, which increased in altitude as he got deeper among them, he began to perceive—first, bushes and underwood, then stunted trees; and by the abrupt winding of his path round a rocky precipice—he was brought within full view of a long, narrow valley, covered thickly with wood, which extended a great way up the mountains, on either side, as far as he could see.

“Here then, I conclude,” said Zissersdorf to himself, “begins the forest of Nagy Retsky. But I neither discover a human abode, nor the traces of a human being.”

Recalled, by this time, from his wan-

dering thoughts to a sense of his real situation and difficulties, the knight began to look keenly around him; and saw, to his satisfaction, when the orb of the sun was no longer wholly visible above the earth, something move, upon the brow of a hill (the last of the chain), which appeared to unite itself with the forest. He doubted whether it was a man or a goat; but on more attentive observation, he became quite convinced that it was a man—and spurred his horse onward, in order to reach the hill, while day-light yet remained. The noble animal, despite of having, for many days, been ill fed, ill tended, and over worked, obeyed the impulse with his wonted spirit: sprang forward, over the level ground, like a deer; nor slackened his pace, 'till he had ascended the side of the hill, which, though steep, was perfectly accessible, as Sir Woldemar approached it. But when he had reached the brow, the object of his search could no more be seen, although the top of the hill lay quite bare

before him for a considerable space around; and Zissersdorf now perceived, to his surprise, that, instead of immediately adjoining the wood—a deep chasm interposed between that and the spot on which he stood, impossible to be passed, from his side, but by descending a line of rocks nearly perpendicular, and full ninety feet in height.

He slowly, therefore, retreated from the hill, on the same quarter by which he had come up; and, internally fretting at this disappointment, in the exhausted state both of himself and his horse, he entered the wood, by the way of the valley—dismounted—secured his horse—and prepared to pass the night where he then was, postponing any attempt at further discoveries till the morning light should return.

But as it was a long time now since Sir Woldemar had enjoyed a full meal, and as he found himself ravenously hungry at present, he made use of the scanty light which yet lingered behind the setting sun, to search among the brambles for berries

and wild fruit. While thus employed, he thought of the figure by whose appearance he had just been led away to the top of the hill, and doubted whether 'twere any human being. No human creature, he thought, would have endeavoured to avoid him; or could have succeeded, in that situation, if he had endeavoured—so quickly as the horse advanced upon him: though he could not but admit it to be possible, that a native of the place, ignorant as a savage, and habituated to the mountainous country, might have fled from a stranger, and with an activity beyond his comprehension. Just then, he chanced to turn round; and fixed his eyes, instantly, upon an object which astonished, and, desperate as he was, for the moment alarmed him.

He beheld, within a few feet of himself, a man, who stood leaning over the arm of an oak, and who appeared to contemplate him steadfastly. This person, if he had held himself upright, must have been remarkably tall, as the bough on which he

leant was more than three yards from the ground: but his figure could not be seen, distinctly, for the tree—and he was covered with a mantle, which hung over his forehead, and, aided by the imperfect light, completely concealed his face.

“I saw you, as I think,” said Woldemar; for he began to ask the necessary questions, after waiting some time without hearing the voice of the stranger——“I surely saw you, not long ago, while I was on my way hither, and riding through the valley now upon my left; but as you were above me, and at considerable distance, I cannot be certain of you. Speak, fellow, if you have a tongue in your head; and tell me whether you are an inhabitant of these parts?”

The man nodded assent, with a strange kind of noise, which struck Woldemar as being intended for a laugh.

“In what part of the country,” continued Sir Woldemar, “am I to find one Zewski, a servant of the Emperor Conrad,

and a person, I believe, of some authority within this forest?"

The other pointed over his shoulder, in a North-easterly direction, towards a wider track than the Knight of Zissersdorf had yet perceived.

"Will you not speak, then? or can you not speak!" cried Zissersdorf: "but it little signifies—I observe your signs, and think I can comprehend them——stupid boor as thou art."

The man bowed his head, as before, and uttered a wild, hissing sort of sound, which irritated Sir Woldemar, who, again suspecting that he was laughed at, resolved, as he remounted his steed, to compel the peasant to accompany and show him the way. But when he returned to the place where the former had stood—there was nobody to be seen; and Zissersdorf supposed that he had hidden himself, or retired far amongst the underwood, where no one on horseback could approach him.

Before the last glimmerings of light en-

tirely faded away, Woldemar entered the track which the stranger had pointed out—though not till after considerable hesitation and doubts, whether he should be benefited by plunging deeper into the wood—and indeed, not absolutely without suspecting that some foul play might be designed him.

But he had not got on above half a league, when he saw something glitter through the trees, which he was willing to persuade himself must have proceeded from a lamp in a dwelling house; and, on ascertaining that fact, he thought better of the peasant who had directed him, and made strait for the spot.—The mansion was a low building, full as low as the ordinary huts of the hinds thereabouts, but extending over a more considerable space; and from one of the few outlets which likewise served for windows, shone a feeble light, produced by some vegetable matter slightly manufactured, and fixed upright in a pan of grease.



Sir Woldemar's approach was quickly discovered, and as soon announced, by the yelping of curs of every description, and the terrific baying of more formidable dogs; against some of which, he found himself, after dismounting, obliged to assume an offensive attitude; and the skirmish was on the point of commencing—when a bulky figure appeared at the door.

Whether this personage meant to encourage the dogs in their attack, or to take part with the stranger, seemed dubious at first: but, after contemplating the knight, as well as it could be managed, with the rude lamp which he held in his hand—he inclined to the latter course; and succeeded, but not without blows pretty effectively administered, in silencing all the barking, howling, and clamour.

If the deportment of this man was but rough towards his own four-footed dependants, it assuredly was not much more gracious to Sir Woldemar de Zissersdorf—even although he had reconnoitered him,

was convinced of his superior rank by his dress and bearing, and moreover knew perfectly who he was; as he had been apprized of his exile from the court, and been expecting his arrival for some days.

That this was Zewski, the imperial forester, Sir Woldemar, on his part, without difficulty discovered: and a dialogue ensued, conducted, by both parties, with more of spirit than urbanity.—Zewski gave the knight to understand, that he considered himself to be invested with a command over him; while, at the same time, he was under no obligation to procure him a residence, or contribute to his support and accommodation in any degree whatever. After imparting this agreeable information, he proceeded to reprove Sir Woldemar, for having loitered on his road thither; and was endeavouring to impress upon him the little respect which he could feel for any man—nobleman or not—who had fallen into disgrace with his sovereign—when Zissersdorf, whose forbearance hitherto

would, to some of his old companions, have appeared little less than miraculous—interrupted the imperial ranger, by an order, peremptory in its nature, and most peremptorily expressed—not to utter one word more in that strain. Indeed, Sir Woldemar went farther; for, clapping his hand smartly to his sword, he acquainted the forester with the very urgent temptation which beset him—to cleave him to the midriff for what he had presumed to say already.

Upon such a retort, Zewski, who had been used to carry matters, throughout that district of the forest, pretty much according to his own will and pleasure, took a second survey of the knight with his lamp: and, although his own frame was herculean, he saw, or thought he saw, a character of fury and desperation about the countenance of the other, which induced him, according to a modern vulgarism, to draw in his horns. But he retreated with as bad a grace as he had advanced; and, mutter-

ing some indistinct menaces, said, at length—turning suddenly from Sir Woldemar, but audibly enough—that, whether the cavalier chose to be courteous, or to bluster, he could not, and should not, receive him within his walls.

“Base churl!” cried Zissersdorf, “for this night, at least, I am strongly disposed to compel thee: and unless—without a moment’s delay—you point out to me some other habitation, ’tis more than probable that such will be my conduct.”

“The Heckewelders’ cabin,” said the forester, cowed, but still surly, “lies within two hundred yards of you now.”

“And who may they be?”

“A set of poor needy wretches,” growled Zewski.

“Richer than thyself, in all worth and honour; for that I will undertake,” replied Sir Woldemar: and, the path having been shewn him, as well as the hour would permit—an extremely narrow one it was—he led his jaded horse, and proceeded on foot.

Meantime the forester, slinking within his den, gave vent to his spleen, in an effusion of the most foul-mouthed and rancorous abuse: of which, though not one word could, by possibility, reach Sir Woldemar—his own wife heard every syllable; and augured but an unpleasant evening from the sally.

The knight of Zissersdorf, after some difficulty, and repeated stumbles both of himself and his horse, reached what he supposed to be the hut; but it was in pitchy darkness, and his shouts were for some time unattended to. At length, having found out a piece of rough wood-work, which (though it did not feel much like a door) he considered to form a part of the entrance, he applied his staff to it vigorously; and soon produced some effect, but not from the quarter whence he had immediately expected it. A light began to twinkle, at a small distance from him, voices were next heard, and a female figure then became visible, with the light in her hand. But she

instantly disappeared again; and in less than a minute, no fewer than four persons, men and women, came cautiously forward, as if to examine his person.

“Peace to ye all,” cried Sir Woldemar, “if ye be friends; and if foes—know, that I am prepared for you.”

A parley here ensued, which terminated in the knight’s explaining his forlorn situation, and in an offer on the part of the peasants of all the hospitality which they had it in their power to show him.

Zissersdorf accordingly entered their cottage, which he found to the full as homely as the short mention of them by Zewski, the forester, had led him to expect. All that the walls enclosed consisted of one apartment, if it might so be called; with a fire in the middle, then far on the decline; a hole in the centre of the roof, for the smoke to escape by; and a tattered leathern curtain drawn across one corner, in order to divide that space from the rest, and to afford, as it seemed, a bed-chamber for the

old couple, and perhaps for some of the others also. The family consisted of two males, a father and son, as Zissersdorf understood, and three females, the mother and two daughters. The young man, and the elder of the girls, were grown up, being, each of them, twenty years of age, or very close upon it; whilst the younger sister was still a child, probably not above fourteen.

Sir Woldemar's distresses had, in some measure, taught him to consider other creatures besides himself; and the first that he thought of at present was his horse. Nor did he ask a single question relative to his own wants, 'till he had rubbed down, with his proper hands, that valuable animal, plentifully fed him, and furnished him with better accommodations, in comparison, than he was likely to enjoy himself—under the shed at which he had stopped and knocked, when he first came up to the spot. This out-house had been appropriated to the Heckewelders' cow while she lived; and was so little inferior to the main resi-

dence of the family, that Sir Woldemar felt rather gratified than shocked, when he found it to be intended that he should sleep, during the whole time that he continued there, under the same roof with his steed ; upon clean straw, and with clothing enough at hand, to keep him in tolerable comfort, when the weather should alter. These matters being settled, he returned, with the old man, to the hut, now enlivened by a brisk and cheering blaze—and while the wife was employed in laying trenchers upon a table, and making preparations for supper, the knight amused himself (and no inconsiderable gratification it was) in noticing, more attentively than he had done before, their eldest daughter Bertha, as she assisted her mother.

But apprehensive, perhaps, that such scrutiny might not be altogether acceptable to her parents, he soon resumed his discourse with old Heckewelder, the father.

“ And your name, likewise, was certainly mentioned to me, by that brutal fellow



with the broad shoulders—that man in a sort of authority.”

“ My name, my good lord, is Heckewelder : Fritz Heckewelder am I ; and my son there, as powerful a woodman, though his best friend sayeth it, as any in the forest, is called Hans.”

“ Come hither, Hans,” said Sir Wolde-mar—“ you are an honest lad, and I will venture to pronounce you so, at our first acquaintance. Here is a trifle for thee ; an earnest of what I shall do for your family hereafter.”

The young man bowed low, and humbly ; but his habit was grave ; he was not much given to talk in general ; and on this occasion he said not a word.

“ Your Excellence is too good,” observed the father ; “ and willingly would we lodge you here, without cost or charges : but we are poor folk ; and, to speak plainly, shall be glad to make what we can, by serving your lordship freely and faithfully. We have been on the look after you for these

three or four days ;—Master Zewski's order was, that we must take you in somehow ; and if your Excellence thinks fit to help us on a little—we will do all we can to make the forest agreeable to you."

"That," said the knight, with a side glance at Bertha," may be more easily contrived than I had thought possible. Many thanks, my friends: I had rather be among you, than with the roynish tyke Zewski, were his means of harbouring me tenfold better than they are. Heaven keep him out of my way! I shall surely do the dog a mischief."

"Hist—sir, I pray you; speak not of him slightly; or the very wind will carry it thither."

"You find that man," said Woldemar, "a harsh superior, a heavy task-master, no doubt!"

"The disposition of Master Zewski," replied the peasant, "is not altogether so unthankful either. We all stand pretty well with him just now; for he thinks, and

perhaps he hath some ground for thinking, that my boy there saved the life of one of his children. And the ranger, let me tell your lordship, can wink his eyes a bit, as well as other folks, when he's friendly disposed. We must all have starved, otherwise, long ago." So saying, he pointed, somewhat slyly, at a piece of meat which hung up by the rafters of his cot; and Sir Woldemar perceived, that it had constituted the best half of a hind, before Dame Hekewelder made a substantial inroad upon the store, in favour of his refreshment that evening.

Their supper, the cookery of which had been advancing apace during the conversation, was now in the act of being taken from the fire, and set out upon the table; and, whatever were its imperfections, the Knight of Zissersdorf had rarely, if ever in the course of his life, so thoroughly enjoyed a repast. Their drink, however, the most defective part of the entertainment, was not much calculated to banish the vexations

of Sir Woldemar; the family having but a scanty supply of milk, and the old man deeming it necessary to apologize for the water of the forest, which tasted brackish, and uninviting.

He hinted, however, a possibility, that the mansion of the great Zewski might not be found unprovided with spirits, if any body within the wilds of Nagy Retisky could manage to pay for them; and Zissersdorf readily promised this accession of luxury to all their future meals.

When they had finished, Gaffer Heckewelder pronounced the grace—which Sir Woldemar thought rather long—with uplifted hands, and devout expression of countenance; and the last sentence was repeated by the whole circle, excepting the knight, who, however, bowed his head at the conclusion, with a reverence equal to the rest.

On this occasion, he heard the accents of Bertha for the first time; and, if he had been moved by her personal charms—the conquest was completed by the mild,

melodious, and truly feminine tone of her voice. Some observations he addressed to her—but, from an excess of timidity amounting to awkwardness, she either did not answer at all, or replied in as few words as possible, with her head averted, and her speech directed to one of her parents, or, more frequently, to Hans. With a view of inducing her to mix in the general discourse, if she would not talk to him in particular—Sir Woldemar put questions to them relative to the state of that part of the country; the extent of the White Mountains; and by what description of persons the forest of Nagy Retsky might be inhabited.

“Hitherto,” said he, “I have seen nothing of it myself; but a more desolate region than the approach to your forest, I never yet witnessed: through which, I suspect, one might ramble, for whole days together, without meeting a soul, beside the few people employed here by the Emperor, and your own selves. What say ye all! are ye dumb-founded—or do I not speak

intelligibly? What say'st, Hans? Thou art a shrewd lad, I'll be sworn; though somewhat of a chuff one."

The young man looked at the dame, and her daughters; then at the father; and a sign of some sort having apparently pass'd between them—"If your Excellence should take a fancy for wandering about these woods and wilds," said Hans,—“wander you might, no doubt, whichever way you pleased; and, as your Excellence truly says—without seeing any thing of the nature of common men, be they gentle or simple."

“Say you so,” cried the knight; “then, by my faith, I do begin to know what banishment is. But, my worthy friends, I judge rather, that you are giving too unfavourable a report of the place of your abode; for if 'tis so total a desert as you describe it—whom may I have beheld, this very evening, on the brow of the bare hill which immediately skirts the wood?”

“Be still, brat! and behave thyself

properly," said Dame Heckewelder, addressing herself to Agatha, her youngest daughter; the child having, as it should seem, shewn an unbecoming eagerness to take part in their conversation.

"I know not, my lord," said Hans, shortly; "most likely, no one."

"Nobody!" exclaimed Sir Woldemar—"Even so, Sir Knight," replied old Heckewelder; "appearances along the tops of our hills are often deceitful."

"You will scarcely persuade me out of my own senses, man! Granting, however, that I may have been deceived, as to the distant object; I tell you, that an unquestionable human being, whom I verily believe to have been the same person seen upon the hill, confronted me afterwards, when I had got into the wood, and directed me to the dwelling of that clownish forester."

"Nay, nay," said Heckewelder, in a lower tone; "it could hardly be."

"What can the man mean!" cried Zis-

sersdorf, amazed at his incredulity—"I repeat to you, that such was the fact."

"Did he speak at all?"

"He did not."

"Depend on it, then, your Excellence hath been under some mistake."

Sir Woldemar was again about to reply, and rather warmly—when the attention of the whole party was diverted to the younger of their two daughters. The girl began to sob violently, frequently calling out, in spite of all their endeavours to check her—"He is come back: I knew he would; I am positively sure he is; and I shall not get a wink of sleep all the night long."

"Away with her, Dame; take her away, and put her to bed," cried old Heckewelder to his wife. "My lord, we are ashamed, as well we ought to be, of that silly lass, and her whimsies; but the child, as you see, sir, is of a weak, timid disposition; I question too, whether we have got the right way of managing her—at all times; and



these foolish notions——why, they grow upon her, I think.”

“What notions, my friend?” said Woldemar.

“Never heed, my lord,” replied the old man, “the tales that the folk up at Master Zewski’s may tell you, about our woods. There is not a forest in Moravia without them: and, be all that as it will——within our poor dwelling, we neither do see, nor ever have seen, any thing worse than ourselves. For that, you may take my word, and go to your bed in peace; I would it were such a one as your Excellence hath been used to.”

Sir Woldemar lightly laughed, and somewhat scornfully, at the peasant’s notion that any of their legends were capable of making impression upon him; and having, with much courtesy and affability, wished them good repose, and added something particularly, though jocosely, to Bertha, on the subject of pleasant dreams, and his hopes that she did not participate in the

fancies of her sister—he betook himself to his out-house and straw.

There, notwithstanding his past fatigues, and present situation, which, all things considered, was really far from an uncomfortable one, he did not fall asleep with such readiness as he had expected.

Sir Woldemar of Zissersdorf would not have declined the most hazardous enterprise which lady, prince, or baron could have proposed to him; and, however he might chance to be circumstanced, he generally rejoiced in the prospect of actual danger, as affording an opportunity, by which he was sure to profit, of extorting admiration. He would fain, likewise, have persuaded both others and himself, that his mind was as superior to the terrors of imagination; to the arts of the then ignorant, but cunning priesthood, and the tales of superstition. But in this last point, it is most probable that he had partially deceived himself: the superstitions of that age, founded upon a religion which man-

kind had corrupted, acted with more or less effect upon the whole race; and certainly were not without their power over Sir Woldemar. Well did he remember every thing that had passed in the Woodman's cot; the fright and distress of the child Agatha; and what had subsequently transpired about the evil repute of the forest. He heard the cry of the screech-owl from without; the groaning of the trees, under a strong blast; as well as various strange sounds, by no means calculated to cheer him, of which he could suggest no explanation.

He thought of the man who had shewn him the way to Zewski the forester's house; and now called to mind, what had escaped his particular notice, at the time—the position in which the figure was leaning, and in consequence, what his extraordinary stature must have been, if he had stood upright.

Under the influence of these reflexions, Zissersdorf almost expected to see the door

of his shed burst open, and that man, or something else of terrific aspect, approach the place where he lay. The occasional noise of his own horse moving in his stall, relieved him more than he would have chosen to admit: but, despite of all gloomy ideas, sleep stole on imperceptibly; and when he awoke in the morning, he amused himself by the recollection of his late uncomfortable feelings,—though no consideration on earth could have induced him to acquaint any body else with 'their nature. But whatever adventures Sir Woldemar might have reckoned upon, in the wilds of Nagy Retsky,—(and certain it is, that, without causing him any great alarm, some incidents did daily occur, for which he, in vain, attempted to account,)—no striking events followed each other with sufficient rapidity; to engage the full power of his mind.

He was constantly unemployed and discontented, pining for the recovery of his lost consequence, and brooding over en-

vious and vindictive feelings. In this morbid state, a ready object for any sort of temptation, the eternal enemy suffered him not long to remain without one: and how to requite the simple kindness of his hosts, by the destruction of their daughter Bertha, both in this world and the next, became the sole occupation of his thoughts.

By degrees he established some familiarity with her; indeed, he was quick enough to perceive, that the condescending, airy, half jesting manner, which he had usually adopted towards females of an inferior cast who might happen to be his favourites, would by no means succeed with Bertha Heckewelder.

Her disposition was pensive, almost to melancholy; and she had a bashfulness or reserve, or—it may be pride—which instantaneously caught the alarm at any symptom of conceit and presumption in an individual of the other sex; and which also readily manifested the offence that she had taken.

Sir Woldemar shaped his mode of pro-

ceeding accordingly: he spoke, perhaps, less directly to her, than to the rest of the family; but took care that none of her remarks, in their general conversation, should be lost; assented to whatever she said; commented upon it, simply, but flatteringly; assisted her, unobtrusively, in any household work about which she might chance to be employed—and, without sighs, or grimaces, looked at her, from time to time, so affectionately, that her fear and awe of him wore insensibly off. She no longer reddened and stammered, whenever there was a necessity for her talking to him; but, on the contrary, would frequently be the first to begin; she asked him innocent questions about a world of which she knew nothing; she listened to him, and (though not in the degree that his vanity led him to suppose) she certainly liked him.

One evening, Zissersdorf returned late from an excursion amongst the neighbouring mountains; and having taken due care of his horse, he entered the cottage, where he

found nobody but the sisters; Bertha engaged in preparing their supper, and the child Agatha helping her.

“ You are fond of wandering abroad, my lord,” observed the elder of the two; “ and, of late, have been more so than ever. The bad weather will soon come on—and, do you purpose, I pray you, to roam about, in this fashion, all through the winter?”

“ In the winter, Bertha, we shall have many delights well suited to the season. Our stores must be plentiful: that shall be my care, and your good brother’s. We will be comfortable—we will be warm—we will be friendly, merry, and happy. But if it were only to hunt for our supply of food, I must be much in the woods. My life has been an active one; and without active exertion, I should pine and droop; look pensive as, ever and anon, does my sweet Bertha—and who knows, but I might want her sense of conscious innocence to keep me in heart!”

“ Go to, my lord; you are now either

charging yourself unjustly, or speaking only for the purpose of being contradicted. How should any one have wherewithal to reproach himself, who can live here, among simple folk, so quietly, harmlessly, and contentedly, as we see you do."

"Alas, Bertha; both a warrior and a courtier have I been, from the day in which I left my father's castle: and courts, as well as camps, are dangerous places. In the first, we compass our ends by every means, save actual violence; and in the second, by every means, violent or not. But, for myself in particular," he added, with an altered voice and countenance—for he was on tender ground—"if I am guiltless, and undeserving of disgrace—how came I here at all! Why was I exiled to this desert? You know, Bertha, that Woldemar of Zissersdorf is a banished man!"

"I hear so," she replied; "but I cannot understand it. Your manners are gentle; your words are kind; you are the



enemy of nobody—and, what enemy can you have made?”

Sir Woldemar had hitherto contrived to conceal from himself the whole turpitude of his intentions; but so keen a pang affected him here, of something nearly a-kin to remorse; that he was on the point of leaving her abruptly, and rushing from the cottage. However, after an interval of no very pleasant meditation, he at once changed the subject of their discourse.

“You seemed disposed,” said he, “to upbraid me for my wanderings. But does not Bertha herself—with her little pretty sister there, stroll at her pleasure through these wilds at all times, and in every quarter? for the forester, I find—the man Zewski, brute as he may be, is inclined to befriend you; and I rejoice to hear it. Familiar, therefore, as you must, by this time, be with the many devious tracks and glades, you may roam therein, to your heart’s content. No evil can befall you; the wolves, unless pressed by wintry famine, would be

afraid to prowl near you; and no mortal is likely to cause you any disturbance."

"I am glad, my lord," returned Bertha gravely, "that you have met with none yourself."

"Now, as I live," cried Woldemar, "something more is intended by those words, than merely meets my ear. That there were beings, amid these woods and mountains, who differed from the ordinary race of mankind, I have long thought—in truth, I have long known it: and, not to mention what may have occurred before this very afternoon—you frown, my dear girl! in what have I displeased you?"

Bertha checked him, by a significant glance at her sister. The young Agatha, commonly, stood in much awe of their distinguished guest; and had hitherto forbore to interrupt this dialogue, by word or movement: but now, pale as a ghost, and with some peculiar feelings excited, which she seemed unable to resist—she ran up to Bertha; and, pressing so closely against

her shoulder, as to hide her own face, cried out—"I hoped, sister, that he had left us for ever. I am sure you said so, Bertha; and Hans said so; and they all told me so. But here he is still, you find: you may hinder any body from talking about it—but I know he is still in the forest; and sooner or later, he will——O sister, sister, our great guest, the cavalier here, hath certainly seen him——"

"Do not alarm yourself about nothing, my little friend," said Woldemar, aware of Bertha's anxiety lest her sister should be terrified and distressed; "I spoke only of certain wild animals, which, from their size, cannot be very formidable: but they appear to be curious; and I never remember to have seen such before I came hither."

The girl looked up at him for a moment; keenly watched his countenance, as he concluded — and, shaking her head gently, returned to her work: while the knight, without attending further to her,

or even to her sister, sat pondering upon what she had said—till he was roused from his reverie by the entrance of old Heckewelder, accompanied by his wife and Hans. After fit reverence paid to Sir Woldemar, whom he had only seen for an instant, at an early hour in the morning—the old man began to roar lustily for his supper. He had not, however, long to wait: but the meal (had it not been for his lively spirits, which kept up on this occasion, as indeed, they were very apt to do) would have passed in almost total silence. The mind of Zissersdorf was not at rest; and he made no attempt, or saw no necessity for disguising his feelings: but having taken it into his head that Bertha, for some cause or other, was likewise affected by what had taken place before the others returned—he exerted himself, now and then, to restore her to tranquillity.

Of the scanty knowledge enjoyed by mankind in that rude and illiterate period, Sir Woldemar possessed his full share;

and what he knew, he had been, for some time, in the habit of imparting to Bertha, who received his instructions with delight and gratitude. Upon those subjects, therefore, he now endeavoured to converse with her, in an under tone—but soon relapsed into taciturnity and absence of mind, on overhearing a part of the following brief communication between Dame Heckewelder and the lad Hans: in which they probably had engaged, under the supposition that the knight was as much taken up with Bertha, as was old Fritz Heckewelder with an endless story of his own about a boar which, near Christmas, in the preceding year, had killed or ruined seven of the ranger Zewski's dogs, and wounded two of his men badly, before they were able to master him.

“Hans!” said the dame, “I have a word for thine ear. Do lean thy head towards me: I wish to speak with thee.”

“Speak away then,” said the young man,

“ but be not long; and speak so that one may understand thee?”

“ Is it known, I say, for certain, that he hath come back to our woods?”

“ As surely, as that the sun will come back to-morrow morning.”

“ I was willing to hope, that we should have seen him no more.”

“ Likely enough, I wished just the same myself.”

“ On what day did he first show himself again?”

“ You are raising your voice, dame! Not so loud: do remember where we are.”

“ Was it not on the very same evening when this nobleman, this Sir—Ziss——”

“ Hold your tongue, prithee; we are watched, I tell you——be quiet, be quiet.”

Roused to vexation by what he could collect of their dialogue, Woldemar was not the man to deny himself every explanation and satisfaction which could be procured. He acquainted Gaffer Heckewelder, therefore, in a subdued but decided tone,

that he had something to communicate to the family, when their youngest daughter should be dismissed: and the woodman, in consequence, sent her off to bed without delay. But the place where she slept being, in truth, as much in the same room with the rest of the company, as if she had still continued to make one of them, it was necessary to wait, till she should be actually sleeping.

Heckewelder, the father, who had his full portion of curiosity, though he guessed, in a general way,—and dreaded what was to come out——soon affirmed that Agatha was sound asleep; and appealed to her regularly audible breathing, as a confirmation of what he had said. Several doubted the fact; and Bertha would have remonstrated against the conclusion—but was silenced, at once, by the voices of both her parents.

Hans, however, in his peculiar way, sometimes short almost to sternness, declared his opinion, that the child was nei-

ther then asleep, nor—if they persevered in what they were going to talk of—would be so, through the whole night. But he was over-ruled likewise; Sir Woldemar (who secretly disliked him, for being the only one of the family whom he could not govern) taking an active part against him: and, when they had contracted their circle, thrown more wood upon the fire, and replenished the great oaken goblet, which now circulated briskly, at least among the males of the party, the knight began, with no formal preface, but with a look so serious as to ensure their utmost attention.

“How far you may be disposed to deny or disguise the facts that I am about to mention, I cannot judge: but the truth is, my friends, that your wilds are inhabited—infested, at least, by some creatures of an extraordinary nature; and the wondrous tales which I have heard, in my childhood, without giving more credit to them than sufficed for my own amusement, seem



here likely to be realized. What happens to me, happens, I presume, to all; and I conclude, therefore, that there exists not an individual among you, who is not in the habit of hearing his own name pronounced aloud in the most savage and solitary places. Now, I would wish to learn, whether the fays, witches, or demons—however and whatever you may call those beings who thus molest people—ever assume before you any visible form?”

“In the first place,” said old Fritz, “if I might make so free with your Excellence, I would, in our turn, desire to be told, what you may have seen yourself; and whether, either by seeing or hearing, any thing hath come to your knowledge, in these parts, which you were ignorant of before?”

“That certain words have been addressed to me,” said the knight, after musing for some moments; “that certain sentences have frequently been uttered in my hearing, when I was unable to dis-

cover from whence they proceeded, I shall not deny. But of their import I am not sufficiently clear, to undertake, now, to repeat them—and doubt, moreover, how far my own fancy may have deluded me. On my eye-sight, I can place a safer dependence; and though you will all laugh at me to my face for what I shall say,—and ridicule me yet more when absent—I do aver, that I saw something this afternoon, no longer ago, which must have been preternatural; and that the sight was no dream or deception.—Why doth your fair daughter change colour; and what means that half smothered exclamation, Bertha? You will only deride me, as I proceed with my story——”

“ I fear, my good lord, we shall find that the subject is not a very suitable one for sport.”

“ Right, girl,” cried her mother; “ what happened to Jurgen of Hollendorp, for his unbelieving audaciousness—we all well remember!”

“ I feel strongly inclined to talk no more about the matter,” said Sir Woldemar, rather to himself than to those about him: “ a circumstance which, when we are alone, may affect any of us with unmingled astonishment, will often appear trifling, or even ludicrous, on being imparted to others.”

Here, Gaffer Heckewelder, after a long and powerful draught, leant forwards, in an attitude of renewed attention;—but Woldemar still paused.

“ The knight hath seen him,” observed Hans, speaking low, but very distinctly—“ in his smallest form.”

“ Give me the cup!” cried Woldemar wildly; “ hand me the goblet, old man. By all the saints and martyrs! I am seated, at this instant, for aught I can tell, in an assemblage of sorcerers; and must keep myself in courage, as I best may.” He drank deeply;—and as he put down the cup—“ you speak but the truth,” said he to Hans, “ however you might come by it: for I defy all the elves that ever gamboled

in the moon-beam, to be visible to mortal eyes in a smaller. As clearly as I behold thee now—did I discern a creature this day, upon the open brow of the mountain, human in shape, but diminutive as a fairy in stature. It approached me; but while I stared in amazement—withdrew promptly from my gaze; and either vanished into air, or concealed itself beneath the heath alone; for no other shelter was at hand—and fruitless were my endeavours to regain the slightest glimpse of the same object. Neither have I always remained undisturbed—(what may have disturbed me, signifieth not)—within the shed where I sleep, during the hours of darkness.”

“ Good Angels guard us! so near to our dwelling too!” cried the dame.

Sir Woldemar resumed. “ Can you, or will you—can all, or any of you, throw light upon these matters? are these things follow’d by no consequences; or, what do they portend? did fear of any created being belong to my nature—I should be render’d

hourly uneasy. You, young man, appear to be the one who is vers'd in these mysteries—Tell me therefore, with the native sense which I perceive you possess, what it is which haunts your woods, and how long you have been subject to such a visitation.”—Hans took some time to consider before he answered. “If it please you, my lord,” said he, at length, “we, none of us, can pretend to give him a name. This much we know of him, and this alone: that the few peasants hereabout, while they do their best to live well and innocently, have nothing to fear from him. Sir Knight, I also feel myself forced to acquaint you, that we were quite freed from him—Aye, we had lost sight of him for more than a twelve-month, before your Excellence came amongst us.”

“Deliver my body and soul!” cried old Heckewelder, “who was it that look’d into the cottage, just then?” All arose in the utmost consternation: Dame Heckewelder began to whimper: Sir Woldemar supported

Bertha, and turned towards the door with an air of assumed determination, of bold and reckless defiance: while Hans manifested the most real composure.

“In your eagerness, Goodman,” said he, “to hear what this noble cavalier had got to tell us—you forgot to return thanks after our supper.” Fritz immediately acknowledged and lamented the omission: the whole party drew round the table again; and Heckewelder pronounced the grace, in accents of awful devotion, with addition of all the short prayers which the monks of a neighbouring monastery had taught him to repeat.

Before he retired to rest, Sir Woldemar spoke privately to Hans, and desired that he would take a turn with him (near midnight as it was,) into the wood—and talk further of what had just engaged their attention. But the young man declined it; and Woldemar, offended, permitted himself to speak petulantly—and observed, that such subjects were indeed more comfortably dis-

cussed in broad day-light, or amidst a circle of friends.

To which sarcasm, the cottager, without at all departing from the usual deference and civility of his manner, replied, that Sir Woldemar had spoken confidently of his own fearlessness that evening; and he would be the last man to doubt or question it: but, if occasions should arise—which might easily be—to call for its particular exertion, he trusted that the courage of others would be just as apparent, and might be equally depended upon.

For some days after this, Zissersdorf took it into his head that the family looked on him coldly and suspiciously; and he believed, that every cause of alarm, and every cross accident which might befall any of them, would be attributed to his inauspicious arrival.

He likewise grew impatient at the slow impression hitherto made by him upon the heart of Bertha: he dreaded a certain firmness, a rectitude of character which ap-

peared through all her simplicity; and he heartily cursed her formalities, with the superstitions of the rest. But to quarrel with them, would never do: he exerted himself, therefore, to please and be useful, more sedulously than ever; and, nothing having lately happened to distress or annoy them—he soon recovered his ground. With Bertha, he persuaded himself, he had never lost any; but he soon recovered the good will and apparent confidence of the whole family; excepting that of Hans indeed, who continued to avoid him—as, to say the truth, he had ever done—and who communicated with him as little as possible, when they were obliged to meet.

As to Bertha, Sir Woldemar now improved his opportunities with her, to the utmost of his power: on many occasions, he prevailed with her to accompany him in rambles of some extent; he talked to her more freely, in reality, though not in sound, than before; artfully, speciously, mischievously, yet, in terms, unexceptionably;



he mixed more flattery with his discourse ; and because she made no objection to such addresses, or, in fact, any observation whatever upon them—which many a courtly damsel would have done, with a view of getting at more—the knight conceived, that he had at length discovered where she was weak, and might be accessible.

And did he, it may be inquired, feel no compunction, for this meanness, cruelty, and ingratitude, towards innocent people who thought him their friend, as firmly as they knew themselves to be his? He felt a great deal: so much, at times, as to enter into solemn vows and compacts with his own conscience, that he would desist from his designs, and contribute, in earnestness and honesty, to the welfare of that poor family. Those vows, he, not improbably, might have kept, had either precept or habit impressed him with the least necessity for self-control ; had he not been given over, where he sojourned at present, to a life of total idleness ; and had not the

customs of the age in which he lived, used him to consider the peasantry as scarcely belonging to the same order of animals with himself.

On a still afternoon which had succeeded a boisterous day—it was now about the middle of autumn—when the tempest had thickly strewed with leaves every glade in the forest, besides rending mighty limbs from the trunks of many trees, and totally uprooting others of a feebler growth—Sir Woldemar returned from the chase, and, as usual, made the best of his way to the Heckewelder's cottage. There he found the dame asleep, by what had been a good fire; Agatha employed in sweeping from the hut such fragments of the morning's repast as their thrift had not induced them to preserve; and the elder sister seated near her mother—not indeed, like her, asleep—but deep in thought, and as quiet as if she had been so.

“Almost from sun-rise to this moment, lovely Bertha,” said Zissersdorf, “have I

been exerting my most strenuous endeavours to bring you home some venison. But I cannot highly boast of my success: your father and brother, let us hope, will do something better."

"In what a terrible storm have you been abroad!" replied Bertha; "we shall make you as expert as the most hardy and venturous of our foresters: for many such days have we to look for, from this time, till the return of spring."

"If every evening might be equally placid and serene with this," said Zissersdorf, "I should not complain of the forenoons, though each were to bring a hurricane. Toil, were it infinitely beyond any that I have yet experienced, will be sweet in my Bertha's service; and, on my return home, after every morning's duty—with her, I shall expect—all nature reviving around us—the sort of calm and delicious walk which I now venture to promise myself. Come Bertha; and when I point out to

you the devastation produced by the earlier part of the day—we shall enjoy in more abundant measure, the mild, temperate, and refreshing air which prevails at present, and the gleam of the departing sun.”

“ Be it rather to-morrow, Woldemar ; since by that single name you have encouraged me to address you.”

“ Your friendly appellation,” said he, “ is most acceptable and flattering to me. But why should we defer such gratifications as are innocent ?”

“ Excuse me, I pray ; I have been forbidden to stir from home, after the sun hath sunk below yon mountain.”

“ Am I not a sufficient protector ?”

“ ’Tis no ordinary danger that I dread ; and you well know the nature of my father’s apprehensions. Remember our late conversation ; remember what you have heard from my father and brother ; remember what you have yourself witnessed, and are unable, with all your learning, to explain. No, no ;

I venture not into the forest when the sun is declining."

Zissersdorf still strove to persuade her, but his efforts were ineffectual; and in order to while away the time till the hour of supper, he strolled out alone, not entirely satisfied with Bertha's refusal.

That she might have her fears and misgivings, he could not but admit. But she ought, (he considered,) had he inspired her with the passion which it was his object to excite—to have sacrificed her feelings in his favour, and risked more than imaginary evils, for above two hours enjoyment of his society. Uneasy doubts obtruded themselves, whether Hans Heckewelder might not have affected her, in some measure, with his own unfavourable judgment of him; which Sir Woldemar dreaded, for he felt it to be just;—and, as he revolved in his mind how it were possible for the ignorant clown Hans to have looked, through all pretences and disguises, into his very heart—he secretly denounced him

for vengeance: endeavouring to convince himself, that he should surely have dismissed all ill intentions against any individual of the family, but for his determination to baffle the precaution of that young peasant with his injurious suspicions.

Woldemar, while he thought of these things, walked on farther than he had designed; and in a part of the forest to which he was least accustomed. The sun, as he believed, had already set: at any rate, the trees had power greatly to obstruct the light that remained; and he took his stand on a rising ground, for the purpose of recovering, while he had yet the means of doing so, one of those land-marks which he had before noted in the course of his ramblings; and which, when regained, would enable him to reach his home as well by night as by day. From this eminence, he saw, as he imagined, a principal one among those well known objects—the bare trunk and highest branches of a gigantic oak, over-topping all the other

trees in the same quarter of the forest, and entirely denuded of leaves, even in the midst of summer. But though blasted, discoloured, and torn to the very core, by lightning, it was judged to be firm as ever at the root; since tempests which prostrated its most hardy neighbours had spent their fury in vain upon this grim and lofty skeleton.

Zissersdorf, accordingly, observed the direction of the tree; and again plunging in amongst the wood—made for that point. But he was a long time in his progress towards it; the obstructions were numerous and vexatious; the evening light totally failed him; and he was even obliged to use his sword vigorously, in cutting away the brambles which continually impeded his course.

After some time, he raved,\* and swore aloud; and began to doubt, whether he had not set forward in a wrong direction; and whether he should get to his mark, the withered oak, during the whole night.

The rising of an occasionally bright

moon, however, relieved him in some degree; and, in the first instance, aided him, by shewing another hill, from whence he promised himself that he should once more get a sight of the object which he sought.

On his way thither, he was suddenly startled—and so great was his amazement, that it arrested his steps for some minutes, at a most appalling sound, which seemed to proceed from the deepest recesses of the wood. Woldemar could compare it with nothing but the simultaneous overthrow of several of the stateliest trees; but, what should have produced such a catastrophe, he could not conjecture: the night was mild, and unusually still, for the time of year; myriads of stars shone forth in unclouded brilliancy; and not a breath of wind was stirring.

He stood, awhile, in profound attention; but no sounds being immediately repeated, he muttered something to himself.

It might have been a spell; for charms



against the power of fiends and demons were then universally adopted and confided in: it might have been a prayer; for Zissersdorf, with all his irregularity of conduct, had such notions of religion—he called it christianity—as generally sufficed for the period in which he lived: and, that done, he again pushed forward, manfully, 'till he reached the knoll.

There he discovered that he had been pursuing an erroneous course throughout. The scathed oak, more visible than ever, and looking almost terrific, in the uncertain light which the moon afforded, was distinctly upon his left hand, when, according to his calculation, it should have been exactly the reverse: but, though disappointed in its situation, he appeared to be considerably nearer to the tree, than when he first discovered it—and, from that circumstance, he derived some satisfaction.

Sir Woldemar, a violent and impetuous man, was really a bold one: in addition to which, at this juncture, he was roused,

rather than fatigued, by exertion, and chafed by crosses; so that the daring passions of his nature predominated over the timid with more, perhaps, than their accustomed force. But despite both of his anger and his audacity, he shuddered; he felt his heart beat, and drew his breath quicker, on hearing a sort of sound somewhat resembling human laughter; which he immediately seemed to recollect—and which he soon more perfectly remembered to have been uttered by the man who had confronted him in the woods, on the first evening of his arrival within the confines of Nagy Retsky.

Zissersdorf, however, made ready for action—appalled as he was—and for offensive action. He looked this way, and that way, with his sword drawn, and his hand prepared; and had made up his mind to attack and secure the first person, whether man or devil, whom he should discover—when, on fixing his eyes upon the blasted tree, that tall and grisly shape which he

still watched as his beacon—it appeared to be much closer to him than before. The branches also became disturbed ; and, unless Sir Woldemar's imagination was sorely affected—were brandished, to and fro, like the arms of a human creature. In the next moment, this immense object moved forwards ; and, while the trees of the forest crashed at every step of its advance—the monstrous apparition palpably approached him.

Sir Woldemar, as far as he was capable of reflexion, resolved to stand his ground, and manifest his usual intrepidity. But the moonlight seemed to recede and fade ; all objects grew dim before his eyes—his sword dropped from him—and, in stretching forth his arm to recover it, he fell, nerveless, and unresisting, upon the earth.

The Heckewelders meanwhile, who had long waited supper for their distinguished guest, began to wonder, in good earnest, at his absence.

None augured any thing favourable

from it; all were alarmed; several expressed their alarm; and Bertha, who had certainly a regard for him, was very uneasy.

But Fritz, the father, always a punctual man at any meals that he could command; and who, as he grew old, relished the waiting for his victuals less and less; at last remarked, that if any mischief should have befallen the cavalier, which he invoked every saint and angel to avert—he knew not how it could be remedied by their going supperless to bed.

They proceeded, therefore, to their repast, though but little pleasure, and less discourse, accompanied it.

The females, after beseeching the men to sit up, and watch for the chance of affording Sir Woldemar any aid of which he might stand in need—had now gone to rest; and the others, who remained watching for some time, without any result, were about to do the like—when some one tapped gently at the door of the hut.

Hans instantly started from his seat;

but old Heckewelder, at first, held him back, with all his strength; communicating, in a whisper, his suspicions as to the nature of their visitor. The lad, however, felt or acknowledged no dread—unfastened the door—and admitted Sir Woldemar; who, without saying a word, or replying to any of their questions, sat down before the table, and looked at all the family (for the old woman and Bertha, having dressed themselves hastily, had now come forth again), as if he was totally unconscious of his former acquaintance with them.

. Hans made signs, that they should forbear talking to him at present; and the father handed him a horn of pure spirits, which he drank off at one gulp—and abruptly demanded, how he came there!

After much desultory conversation, rather appalling to the inmates of the cottage, in which the mind of their guest seemed, at one moment, eager and interested—and, in the next, wandering, or utterly lost—they collected, though but obscurely, that

the knight had either fallen into a trance in the wood, or witnessed something so terrific as had deranged his understanding.

His talk admitted of either supposition: for he persisted in affirming, that he knew not who had brought him home; while he described himself, as having beheld a stupendous and fearful being—"who crushed under his feet," said Woldemar, "the mightiest trees of the forest—as the boar tramples down the corn——"

"Then, woe betide us, every one!" cried Dame Heckewelder, weeping: "he hath not taken that form since my grandsire's days: and, the story goes, that at the very hour when he last appeared so—happened the great earthquake at Posen."

"Peace, woman!" said her husband; "you know not what you speak of. Avaunt with thy forebodings; and distress us not more than there is a necessity for!"

"Her speech may be sooth, though;" observed Zissersdorf; "for, by St. Peter, what I have witnessed this night, might well

portend the destruction of half the cities in Christendom."

"Sir Knight," said Hans—"I would be bold enough to ask you, whether you had an opportunity of seeing his face?"

"By your questions, young man, you appear to know full as much as you ought to know:—be satisfied—I have seen his face. The hue thereof was like a furnace; 'twas deeply coloured as the western sun, after the sultriest day in summer."

"You look unwell, my lord, said Bertha timidly; "had you not better endeavour to get some rest?"

"Sleep and I, Bertha, shall long be strangers: but I am fatigued, bewildered, and exhausted."

He rose to depart.

"Surely, my lord, you will not leave this roof to-night," said Heckewelder.

"I have derided others," observed Woldemar, talking to himself, but audibly; "I have laughed others to scorn, for their faith in such marvels; and now hath my

own trial arrived ! Courage, friends ! Boldly bear up, ye worthy sons of the forest ! If I have brought back your demons hither, I am also he who shall drive them hence. Courage, I say ! My mind may be perverted—my senses deluded—and the power of my arm may be weakened : but, here or elsewhere—surrounded by all of you, or alone in the depths of the wilderness—in this world, or the future one—my fortitude shall only depart with the last spark of conscious existence.”

With this wild rhodomontade, uttered as wildly—he rushed from the cottage; three, out of the four who remained, not daring to look after him. Hans, however, followed him, for a little way, and somewhat soothed the apprehensions of the rest, on his return, by the information, that the knight had shut himself up in the shed where he usually slept.

Sir Woldemar passed the night, it is probable, without molestation ; though, to



judge by his countenance in the morning, he had enjoyed but little repose.

He was, however, more sedate and collected; he possessed, or seemed to possess, as much command over himself as he ever evinced; and after partaking of some refreshment, at the earliest dawn—he mounted his steed, and was seen no more 'till late in the evening.

When he returned, glowing and invigorated by exercise, he accosted Bertha in the same tone of affection as formerly; and gratified her father, by the production of a fresh flask of spirits, which, in the course of his morning's excursion, he had procured from the stores of Zewski, the ranger.

This day concluded more blithely than the last. The males of the family (and perhaps it may be decorous, in this place, to class Dame Heckewelder among them) allowed themselves in a more liberal supply of liquor. The old man became, first, joyous, and then, in his way, sentimental—as

far, at least, as continual prating about his own well-intentioned and honest heart could be so termed: he would likewise have been both inquisitive and mysterious, had he received the smallest encouragement. But the lad Hans repressed all allusion to the scene of the night preceding, both by frowns, and jogs beneath the board with his foot, which might almost have been called kicks; while Zissersdorf himself steadily avoided any mention of the subject.

Several more days elapsed, undistinguished by incident or adventure; and every mind appeared to be at rest.

Our peasants, the Heckewelders, easily disturbed by their superstitious fears, were, generally speaking, as easily tranquillized: from their youth, they had been accustomed to the gloomy and frightful traditions of the remote district which they inhabited: and, as the experience of each convinced him, that such marvellous tales were often overstated—when any immediate cause of terror appeared to be suspended—they could rea-

dily banish all unpleasant impressions from what they might have heard, and quietly resume their ordinary habits.

Not so, Sir Woldemar. This profligate young courtier, idolizing the admiration of mankind, but utterly unprincipled in his own conduct; sceptical as in the existence of any lofty standard of virtue in either sex, but credulous in the extreme, with regard to certain notions of his own; had been bred up in great reverence for what, at that dark period, was termed the christian religion: nor was it perhaps his fault, if their mode of worship taught him less to amend his life, and restrain his passions, than to receive, with implicit veneration, the decrees of pontiffs, and legends of the age.

Sir Woldemar, therefore, however he might deport himself among the cottagers, had, of late, been unable, for five minutes together, during the twelve hours, to exclude from his thoughts the wondrous sights which he had witnessed since his banishment from Rome. He could not free his mind

from the impression of them, nor, indeed, did he ever make the attempt. On the contrary, he dwelt upon them, painfully and unintermittingly, from sun-rise to sun-set, and frequently much longer: he remembered, with a strong foreboding of its importance to himself, what some of the woodman's family had, more than once, thrown out—that the genius of the place, whether of good or evil inclinations, had been aroused, after a long interval of inaction, by his own arrival there: and he came to a conclusion, that the crisis of his fate was at hand.

Woldemar now, though not without frequent misgivings, and occasional feelings approaching to horror and despair, grew eager to behold, and even to accost, the demon who appeared to haunt those wilds, and consumed entire days in traversing its most savage and solitary districts. But the being long eluded him; and, although his expectations were, at times, wound up to a pitch of trembling anxiety by the sounds

which he heard around him, nothing was visible after all ; and he would return home, wearied, dissatisfied, and dejected.

Such was more particularly his state on a certain evening, when his mind had been so greatly harassed, that if he even looked at Bertha, he scarcely spoke to her ; he noticed nobody else ; and, after merely taking such sustenance as a fast of more than twenty hours rendered necessary—he withdrew to his own cot ; covered himself up, well and thoroughly, amid the straw (the nights were now of a very different temperature from what he had known them), and lay, ruminating, without any expectation, and almost without any wish, for sleep.

Zissersdorf here came to a determination, that, befall him whatever might, in trouble or peril, he would put an end to the suspense which had so grievously worn both his mind and body. He was even inclined to consult with the peasant Hans, notwithstanding that his ill will to him ra-

ther increased than lessened. He could not but feel persuaded, that Hans knew more of the secrets of the forest than either he himself, or any of the rest, had yet avowed: and he was shaping the very words in which he should address him upon the subject—when he perceived, that a dim and faint light had risen within the place where he lay. At first, he could hardly believe it to be real: but when he shook the clothing from him, and sat upright—he beheld, with sensations unutterable, a figure leaning over a part of the hut which projected, and looking directly in his face. His attitude was the same as that of the stranger whom he had first met in the forest—but, this time, Woldemar could discern the colour of his skin, and it was red as blood.

“Attempt not to move,” said the figure: “but resume the use of your understanding, and get the better of your fears.”

“I fear nothing that hath been created,”

answered Sir Woldemar, while his teeth chattered in his head.

The other only replied by the same sort of laugh which Woldemar had heard before, and which, for some cause or other, dispirited and shocked him, to a degree almost insupportable.

The intruder addressed him again. "Woldemar of Zissersdorf is indeed a bold man, amongst men of his own nature; but, to be unappalled by my presence, he must change that nature."

"I do partly comprehend and believe thee," said Woldemar, after a pause of some duration: "I am an evil man, as thou art an evil being. Were I innocent in heart,—neither would'st thou presume to approach me, nor should I regard thee if thou did'st."

"Warrior of the house of Zissersdorf—I spoke but to prove thee; and perceive, by your reply, that you are still affected by a vain and puerile apprehension; and, like most of your species, are influenced by such

notions as are purely imaginary. Innocence is but a term invented to protect the weak, and mislead those who would otherwise—as they are well entitled to do—bear rule amongst mankind.”

“Resolve me one direct question,” said Sir Woldemar, “or I will listen to thee no more. Art thou man, or devil?”

“Why not a man, as you are! Why not a man like yourself, Woldemar, though beyond thee in capacity?”

“False spirit! with the human race thou hast no affinity. Thou can’st, at pleasure, reduce or extend thine own form!”

“True, Woldemar.”

“The complexion of thy countenance differs horribly from the sons of men. The word fear, I am loath to employ—yet will I confess, that I cannot look upon thee without dread and detestation.”

“To that appearance, you will become accustomed; but if the colour of my face should, at first, offend you—it may promptly be withdrawn.”



“Deliver me then from a sight so odious.”

In an instant, the darkness of midnight returned; and Sir Woldemar was unable to see his own hand, though held out close before him.

Soon afterwards also, he heard his horse move (but in no restless or uncommon manner), at the further end of the hovel; and he almost succeeded in persuading himself that he had been dreaming.

Having collected, therefore, all his garments about him, he prepared to lie down again—but sprung up, suddenly! leaped from his bed of straw, as if he had touched a serpent—and stood firmly on his feet.

“Sorcerer! fiend! demon!” he cried aloud: “I hear thy hellish laugh; and thou art still near me! Resume then some visible form, and tell me what it is that you require from me.”

In the centre of the hut, several small sparks seemed to arise, one following the other; and after floating a-while midway,

between the ground and the roof of the building, they united themselves into one body ; which, swelling and extending, soon filled the place with a luminous vapour, as before : and Zissersdorf saw the same figure standing over against him.

“ The hue of thy skin,” said Sir Wolde-mar, “ now looketh, to me, like metal melting in the furnace. Didst thou not say, deceiver, that thou would’st assume some different aspect ?”

Much can I effect; but not every thing,” replied the spectre : “ If you would avail yourself of my power—you must endure my appearance.”

“ I seek not thy aid. For thy power—I defy it. Why dost thou haunt me with incessant persecution—molesting and embittering each moment of my life ! Why, since, to my knowledge, I have never offended thee, art thou so relentless against me !”

“ Son of the illustrious line of Zissersdorf, mistake me not. Of all existing

beings—suppose not that I am your enemy. I, who was present at your birth; who watched your opening disposition—the haughty, self-willed, and becoming disposition of your race; and who, through all the events of your maturer years, have witnessed, with delight, that your nature hath not degenerated.”

“ Away—false fiend! Until I was banished, and driven to this wilderness—I never, in my days, beheld thee.”

“ Most surely, Woldemar; nor was it within possibility that you should. Among these mountains is my proper habitation, and here only am I visible. But I foresaw your approach, young warrior, and have prepared for you the gratifications most acceptable to your heart.”

A new sensation here thrilled within Woldemar’s bosom. “ Do I hear thee rightly?” he cried: “ but no—it cannot be. I am a weak and miserable fool, who voluntarily delivers himself up to delusion. Say then, if thou canst read my heart——

what are the enticements by which I am most readily tempted!"

"You are enamoured of Bertha Heckewelder: passionately do you dote upon her—more passionately than you allow yourself to suppose."

"Should I not rather choose, were the choice granted me, restoration to my sovereign's favour, and mine own rank in the world?"

"Such would not be your immediate preference."

"Demon—for once, thou hast spoken truly: proceed. I no longer dread thee; reserve and caution are no more. Thou dost command my feelings—and to thy words I am all attention."

"Bertha you shall possess."

"Never:—if a pure and virtuous mind be the safeguard which I once imagined—and I am not yet persuaded to the contrary. Unless that notion be false, she will inevitably baffle my designs, even should'st thou conduct them."

“ Ere fifty hours have gone by, Bertha shall be yours. I say it; and a portion of my power you have already beheld.”

“ And what, thou strange and fearful being, will be demanded of me in return: for much, I am well aware, thou wilt exact?”

“ Son of Zissersdorf, I mean not to deceive you. In attending on your birth and infancy, I further chanced to witness a simple ceremony, which you must not only wish undone, but express that wish to me, audibly and unreservedly.”

“ Name the ceremony.”

“ In the grovelling absurdities to which they have devoted themselves, men call it baptism. That idle toy, moreover,” pointing to the cross which the knight wore upon his breast—must be spurned and cast from thee.”

“ To those terms,” replied Sir Wolde-mar, will I never accede. “ Take anew the tremendous form in which I lately saw thee; or any other most abhorrent to my

nature—and do thy worst: for never shalt thou wring from me my last—my eternal hope.”

“Be it so,” said he of the forest: “then farewell to all thoughts of Bertha. Young mortal—I am about to depart: but remember, that at any future moment, by a supplication, thrice pronounced aloud, and on your knees, with your back to the sun, and your person divested of that slavish and superstitious bauble——my aid may be commanded in your greatest need.”

The figure diminished in size as the light faded away, and was soon seen no more: and Sir Woldemar, throwing himself upon his couch of straw, expected to have lain musing upon this extraordinary visitation during all the remainder of the night; more particularly, as he heard the Heckewelder’s cock crow, within a few minutes after he had been left alone. But that very circumstance tended to bring him the relief which he so much required: the thoughts of approaching dawn delivered

his mind, in a degree, from the horror that oppressed him; and such state of comparative ease favoured the deep sleep into which he now fell, and which lasted till the sun had long towered above the line of mountains to the eastward of the cottage.

In broad day, and amid the solitude of the woods, Woldemar gave himself up to meditation on the incident of the night preceding. He thought, with less of terror, upon the being whom he had now fully seen and heard; and indulged a more wilful and fierce inclination for the object of his passion.

He, doubtless, made many resolutions against a renewal, under any circumstances, of so horrible and perilous an intercourse: but derived, in spite of himself, some satisfaction from the promises of the demon, and knowledge of the assistance towards his designs, which he now could, at any time, procure.

Zissersdorf went back to the hut, in an apparent state of hilarity, such as he had

not manifested for a long while. His spirits, indeed, might have seemed forced to some, for his feelings were various and tumultuous: but a pleasurable anticipation predominated; and, to Bertha, at least, rendered him so captivating, that she consumed the greater part of the afternoon in listening to his seductive discourse: and he found means to extort a promise, that she would meet him, on the ensuing day, in a recess of the forest well known to them, and not a quarter of a league from her father's dwelling.

Woldemar passed a sleepless night, in repeating to himself every word of his last conversation with her; in reflecting, with a vain and base triumph, upon the cunning (he called it address) by which, as he flattered himself, her native sense of propriety had been over-reached; and in rapturous thoughts of their approaching interview.

Such was his feverish exaltation of spirits, that he felt himself willing and prepared once more to face the mysterious one of the forest—and as if all the elves and de-



mons who haunted the white mountains, might have yelled around his couch, without disturbing the current of his ideas.

The day broke upon these idle and wicked imaginations. Woldemar arose; contemplated the beauty of the morning; and after a slight repast at the cot, in which, he who so liberally increased their means of subsistence, was ever gladly admitted to partake—he repaired to his appointed station in the wood, nearly an hour before the time when Dame Heckewelder could spare her elder daughter from her side.

And now he began to feel the delusive nature of all human pursuits, and the unsatisfactoriness which attends the very eve of their completion. All night long had he been dwelling with delight on the expectation of this meeting with Bertha: but when the time drew near—his hopes assumed a visionary character; and, resolved as he was, to avail himself to the utmost of the opportunity—doubts would

arise, as to his success, even though he were not opposed, but by that unsuspecting and unprotected female.

The conviction, too, of his own villainy and ingratitude smote his heart deeply; and a keen sense of remorse assailed him, like the effect of divine interposition. Yet did the false ideas in which he had been nurtured prevail: a resolution to make sure of the object for which he had so long panted, was the course in which he chose to persevere; and, with a view of completing his purpose, without such a scene of misery on the part of the unhappy and devoted girl, as must wound his softer feeling,—he was induced, on the suggestion of the moment, to have recourse to that awful being, who had promised him aid, when he should most require it.

Well did Sir Woldemar remember the form of invocation necessary for his design, and punctually did he comply with it. Divested of the cross which ordinarily decorated his breast, he uttered the supplica-

tion, in the attitude and situation prescribed to him—and having completed the charm, he remained for some time, without rising from his knees, in momentary expectation of witnessing its effects. His strongly excited imagination led him to believe that he saw wondrous shapes, now flitting closely before him, and now hovering at such a distance as his sight could scarcely reach, above the tops of the loftiest trees. But when he began to question the reality of these appearances—he heard his own name pronounced softly, from behind him ; and on turning, perceived the horrible countenance of the spectre, within a few yards of the spot whereon he knelt: a countenance, not, as in the night time, resembling the molten ore—but of a deep and livid hue, the colour of human blood.

“ Behold your friend,” said the demon ;  
“ one, not to be parallel’d among the sons  
of men. They, perchance, will contribute  
to what they may term your interest and  
advantage—while ’tis I alone who will

advance your pleasures; and full well did I know, that I should be summon'd for such a purpose. What would the son of Zissersdorf demand?"

"Thou art equally conscious with myself."

"'Tis well, Woldemar: perform then the trifling ceremonies required of thee; and she shall repair hither, accordant to thy wishes: kind, consenting, fearless, devoted to thee; and divested of all feminine prejudices."

Sir Woldemar groaned, as it were, from his very soul; he looked around him, on every side, in the desperate hope that lighter conditions might be offered: he averted his face from his horrible companion; and paced the glade, in a state of mind bordering upon distraction. "What sound was that? 'twas laughter!" he cried, turning fiercely upon the being who stood watching his agitation: "I am betray'd by thee, and derided, as I ever have been—and ever shall be."

“ Restrain this frenzy ;” said the other ;  
“ and be reasonable. No one hath either  
laugh’d, spoken, or moved. Woldemar,  
art thou prepared ?”

“ I am :” replied Sir Woldemar firmly ;  
“ and the result of my determination is,  
that I refuse to barter my soul to its eternal  
foe.”

The figure glared upon him, with an  
eye of fearful and deadly malignity. “ Thou  
hast already advanced too far, poor worm  
of mortality ; and hast lost thy stake :  
while in thy wishes thou shalt never suc-  
ceed.”

“ Be thy words true or false,” returned  
Zissersdorf, “ I here solemnly repeat my  
steadfast determination.” He said this, as  
he walked from the tempter : and on turn-  
ing about to see the effect of his resolution,  
he perceived that he was alone, in the  
heart of the forest. But he did not remain  
long alone : before he had composed his  
mind sufficiently to remember the course of  
this important interview—a slight rustling

was heard among the bushes ; and a female, slowly, somewhat reluctantly,—he thought, timidly—came in sight ; she surveyed him with a look of sadness, and the tears streamed down her cheeks. Woldemar quickly recollected what had originally brought him to that spot—and his heart beat high with transport. “ Welcome, my charmer, welcome, lovely Bertha ! perpetual as have been my disappointments ; eternally as I have been misled by others ; I knew that you would never deceive me.”

“ I am indeed here, Sir Knight, according to my word ;” said she ; “ but I come only to thank you for the favours with which you have assisted my father,—and to tell you that we meet no more ; that, while you abide in this forest, you must seek another dwelling.

“ Nay, my love, this gravity is surely mis-placed.—This is what, in the language of the world, would be called silly prudery. We meet here, my sweet friend, by our

mutual agreement, and—we doubtless understand each other.”

“My Lord, I thought so once; but now, I must be permitted to tell you, that, if you were restored to your former grandeur, and could raise me to a height beyond what I can now form any notion of; if you were the Emperor Conrad himself, and ruler over this whole world—the poor Bertha Heckewelder would rather be in her grave, than hold any farther intercourse with you—save just to say this much in parting; *For your own soul's sake, I do beseech you to choose your companions better.*”

“How now?” cried Sir Woldemar, much alarmed, and angry because he could not conceal it.

“Unhappy young man; with whom did I see you, while I was on my way hither?”

Zissersdorf turned pale, and a cloud passed over his countenance; he stared at her, with an eager and desperate expression,—and trembled exceedingly.

“ If the deed be yet undone,” said Bertha ; “ sell not yourself to that dreadful being.”

“ To whom, girl !” cried Waldemar furiously.

“ To the red man of these mountains.”

“ Dearest Bertha,” he exclaimed, “ you are unjust to me. I have indeed been beset by a fiend most artful and malignant ; but against me his arts were feeble. Accursed, however, is the district infested by such a spirit. Let us leave it, my Bertha : let us flee to the southward of these wilds ; and escape far beyond the Danube, to lead a life of love and happiness.”

“ What mean you, sir ! stand back, and touch me not—have you lost your senses ?”

“ Away, my love, away ; no childish hesitation ; for you are wholly in my power. But fear not—for abandoning your father’s hut, I will amply requite you.”

“ Unhand me ! loose me, wretch ! and believe not that you have any power over



me:—I warn you, that help is near. Leave me, base man,—fit associate for ——.”

“Bertha, this rage is useless: I have loved thee to madness, from the moment when I first saw thee—and I am not accustomed to be thwarted.”

“But shalt be now, thou ungrateful miscreant,” said a loud stern voice; on hearing which, Sir Woldemar released her from his grasp; drew his sword; and in an ungovernable agony of wrath and disappointment—rush’d at Hans Heckewelder, probably designing to put him to death. But the young man avoided his desperate thrust; and as Sir Waldemar, who seemed to feel no apprehension from the resistance of a peasant armed only with a staff, blindly followed the impulse of his passion—he first received a benumbing blow on the sword arm; and a second severer one on the head brought him to the ground, where he long lay senseless.

It would not be easy to describe the feelings of Woldemar when he came to

himself again. Dizzy with pain, he at first knew not where he was, nor what had happened. As he lay, he fixed his eyes upon the sun, then partially obscured by a cloud—and, with the impression that it was past mid-day, his consciousness began to revive. He applied his hand to his throbbing head, and brought it back bloody; his spirit was humbled; even the spirit of vengeance had left him; his heart was rent with misery which seemed to admit of no possible alleviation; he felt himself cold, ill, and forsaken by all his fellow-creatures; and thought himself about to die, forsaken by his creator.

In this forlorn condition, acknowledging his own corruption and depravity, and humiliated to the dust, Zissersdorf, had he known what true religion required, was in no unfit state of mind to have become a real Christian. He stretched out his hands towards Heaven for mercy: but the duty of private prayer was, in that age, little enforced or understood. Sir Woldemar

had no appropriate words in which to express his petition ; but, from the bottom of his heart, he owned himself to be a grievous sinner—and was reflecting, that, to one being in existence, his sins, and his internal shame for them, were alike manifest—when his attention was attracted by something moving at his feet. Its form was diminutive ; but, to his disgust and horror, it seemed to possess a human shape ; and, on looking more closely, he discerned, with a sigh as if all had been irreparably lost, that the face of the creature was coloured like blood—that indelible mark, of which the demon could never divest himself.

Weak as his hurts had made him, Sir Woldemar endeavoured to fly from the spot ; he tore his cloak to staunch the wound in his head ; and summoned up all his remaining powers, to bear him—he knew not whither. But at that moment, a sound was heard, which apprized him of evil being at hand ; and the fiend, in his

accustomed shape and stature, stood before him.

Waldemar, distrusting his own firmness, offered a secret petition to the Highest, for aid, in this emergency.

“Acknowledge at length,” said the red man, (for so, whatever might have been his nature, he was called throughout the forest,) “that my warning hath been well-founded. I left you high in hope; I find you baffled, disgraced, and desponding. Trust, however, in me, and all shall yet be well. Nay, to your other enjoyments, I will add the gratification of complete revenge. The youth who lately opposed thee, cast by my means into a profound sleep, is even now within thine own hut. Obey me, therefore, in the rites that I expect from thee; and return thither to pierce his heart, and remove this hateful object for ever from thy course.”

“Within the hut, say'st thou, where I am used to pass the night?” The demon grinned, and repeated his words. Zissers-

dorf was for some time silent: then starting from his meditation, as if he had worked himself up to a deed at which his natural passions and propensities recoiled—he directed his steps, with a vigour of which he had not conceived himself capable, towards the hovel.

“Not so fast, knight of the house of Zissersdorf,” said the red man: “I ask not much; but before you obtain your ends, the little that I do ask must be complied with.

“My own iniquity alone enables thee to persecute me,” replied Woldemar; “but, wretch as I am, that influence shall be resisted; and while I avail myself of thine information, I go not in thy name, or power.”

The form of the demon altered as he spoke; and gradually assumed the same stupendous and gigantic appearance, which had once already unsettled the mind of Sir Woldemar. His countenance blazed like a comet; and, in a voice, at which Wolde-

mar grew faint and tottered, while his limbs would scarcely support him,

“Thy doom is sealed,” cried the Red Man: “but ere I execute the sentence even now pronounced against thee—declare to me IN WHOSE NAME thou dost proceed.”

Woldemar dared not to encounter the face of the spectre; but kept his ground with what courage he might, and pronounced his answer, in a solemn, steady, and decided tone. After some moments, when he ventured to look up—he saw nothing before him, but the countless trees of the forest with their many-coloured autumnal foliage, and the blue expanse over his head, unpolluted, as far as the eye could reach, by any particle of vapour, while every object within his view was gilded by the declining sun.

At once, a terrific and astounding din burst upon his ear; he thought the earth had split asunder—and grasped, in the wildness of despair, the trunk of an immense elm, for support. But the noise.

though it continued, gradually lessened; to his relief, seemed to be retiring from him; and at length, died away, in a peal of distant thunder, among the mountains of Dombrova.

Sir Woldemar, from that moment, felt a weight removed from his breast: intuitively he became confident that he was, henceforward, to be delivered from the presence of the tempter: and comparatively easy in mind, though still suffering from bodily pain, he repaired to his own cot—where he discovered, that the fiend had spoken just so much truth as might serve the purposes of guile; for Hans Heckewelder most certainly lay upon the straw, wrapt in a profound sleep.

Waldemar contemplated the man who had baffled, upbraided, and wounded him, as he stood over him, with his sword in his hand; and appeared still to struggle with some evil inclination. He changed colour, retreated a few steps, and again advancing, shook Hans by the shoulder

and awoke him. The peasant saw his situation, stretched at his length and unarmed, while the person, whom he not unreasonably supposed to be his rancorous and inveterate enemy, had him completely in his power.

"You design, no doubt, to use this advantage," said Hans; "but whatever you may think now—you will hereafter wish it undone. And yet—I have thought of death often,—I fear not death more than others; but—so suddenly and unprepared——poor Bertha, who shall now protect thee!" He raised himself half up, watchful for the least chance of escape—the least opening by which he might rush upon the other; but the sword of Zissersdorf was pointed directly to his breast.

"Compose your spirit," replied the knight, in a conciliatory tone of voice; "were I even the same man whom you have hitherto known, 'twould not have been in my nature to harm you, as we are at present situated: no, young man,



I should, at all times, have bade you follow me to the wood, armed you with such weapons as I myself possess, and so satisfied my vengeance, or died in attempting it. But, through the mercy and pity of heaven, I am not the same: and I come hither for no other earthly purpose, than to humble myself in the sight of better people than he who would so foully and traiterously have injured them; to give up to them the little that I can command in the world, and to fly from Conrad's dominions, and begin life anew in the service of the Greek Emperor." Here having returned his sword to the scabbard, "Rise," said he, "and lead me to your father."

Hans was not slow in regaining his feet; and after staring, for some time, with much surprize at Zissersdorf, he thus addressed him: "I cannot help feeling that, in a sort of manner, you have given me my life—though, to be sure, it cannot be said, without adding, that I took you for a murderer. My lord, I do truly believe,

that those of your high quality and condition are more prone to be tempted than such as we; but, let me tell you plainly, that you can no longer live under the same roof, as it were, with Bertha Heckewelder. And if a simple lad might presume to advise, you will be the safer, both in body and mind, by holding no more meetings with——the man of this forest. Sir knight, I will deal with you yet more openly. You talk of my father; but Fritz Heckewelder is no parent of mine, neither am I the brother of Bertha. My mother (for my father had died before I came into the world) was a poor widow, Fritz's kinswoman. In these woods I first saw the light—and the Heckewelders bred me up from my very birth: at first, from kindheartedness alone—though since, I hope, I have repaid the old people by my labour. From the time that Bertha was born, we two passed for brother and sister; the old man had his reasons for it—but I full

well knew to the contrary, and so did she likewise."

Sir Woldemar's brow darkened; he turned away abruptly; and the passions of jealousy and envy seemed to strive for their former ascendancy over him.

"And you consider her," said he walking hastily to and fro, "as your future wife?"

"'Tis not unlikely, my Lord, whenever I shall be able to maintain her: for our vows have long been plighted."

At this instant, old Heckewelder made his appearance; and at sight of Woldemar, he reddened with indignation.

"Thou viper," he exclaimed, "I did not believe that even assurance such as thine could have led thee hither again. But, for once, thou art well met: a proud and stately cavalier, one of thine own order, hath arrived in these parts to seek thee; he is with master Zewski even now—and cometh, as I devoutly pray, to take thee from us, for good and all.

"I am wicked enough, my old friend," said Zissersdorf, "but not so utterly abandoned as you may think me; of which, before I die, I trust, you will yet receive some proofs."

So saying, he hurried away to the forester's habitation: dejected, despairing, but impatient to see the person who had inquired for him, even although he fully expected to follow the fate of many nobles, whose disgrace he had known to precede their deaths but by a very short period; and he made up his mind to behold the bearer of a mandate for his execution. Zewski, the ranger, however, met him on his way; and with a mode of salutation which astonished him—cap in hand—one knee to the ground—and his former surly and suspicious manners laid aside for the address of a perfect courtier.

Sir Woldemar, notwithstanding this fawning and adulation, scarcely listened to what he said—and, hastening on, found a baron of his own lineage, a nobleman whom he had known from his earliest childhood,

and one whom, even in his vainest and most ungovernable career, he had ever respected.

From this distinguished person, he learnt, that his father and brothers, with all the numerous connexions of their house, had been judicious as well as active in their intercession for him with the Emperor—nor were their efforts ultimately fruitless, though long defeated by his own pretended friends.

Several of the latter, however—dissipated, needy, desperate, and rash—had, at last, engaged in a treasonable conspiracy, which was only detected on the eve of its completion. Many justly suffered; and some of them, as it appeared, had eased their consciences by a confession of their injurious treatment of Woldemar, whose misconduct, although highly reprehensible, had been exaggerated, and grossly misrepresented, by their contrivances.

The rapid, tumultuous, and extraordinary events of the last few hours had confounded the mind of Sir Woldemar. He feared, that he might yet be subject to the

spells of the being who haunted the forest; and listened, not without some mistrust and apprehension, even to the Baron Wilhelm de Zissersdorf, his near kinsman, and one of the most approved friends of his father and himself.

By degrees, he began to comprehend the full extent of these unlooked-for good tidings; and, struck with the blessings extended to him by the repeal of his banishment—and the still greater, by which he had lately been favoured, under the discipline of mortification and adversity;—Woldemar imparted to Baron Wilhelm an honest and impartial account of his own history, since he came into the forest,—of his temptations—his base designs—and his gracious deliverance: at parts of which narrative, the Baron Wilhelm (though never known to dread aught of mortal mould) grew pale, and repeatedly crossed himself—looked around him with uneasiness, as they walked together in the wood—and readily acceded to his cousin's proposal, that they

should pay a parting visit to the kind and innocent Heckewelders.

The whole family happened to be assembled; and received Sir Woldemar gravely: but, having heard from Hans of his mildness and altered deportment, as likewise from Zewski of his recal to his sovereign's presence, and his approaching departure—they all (nor was Bertha absent) . assured him of their wishes for his future welfare.

But they little thought of the good which the knight meditated for them; and still less of that which he had unconsciously done them.

On his return to court, where he soon became higher in favour than ever—and, by this time, not undeservedly—he caused the removal of Zewski from the forest; but not (however he might have disliked the man) without procuring him another appointment: and, on his favourable report and influence, Fritz Heckewelder was made ranger in his stead; and advanced to a de-

free of consequence, in his own line, than which he could conceive nothing greater.

Still further to promote the comfort of these worthy people, Hans had an employment under the old man, which was recognized by the government, and sufficiently paid, to have maintained Bertha and himself in all the affluence they desired—even if Sir Woldemar had not endowed her with a plentiful marriage portion. Nor did their good fortune end here: for, notwithstanding the occasional misgivings of the family, the terrors of Agatha, and the passion of Dame Heckewelder for the marvellous—they, at length, felt tolerably secure against the visitations of the Red Man. And certain it is, that, however he may since have been heard of in other quarters—and he is even said, in our own day, to have attended, visibly, upon the most ambitious of mankind—he never afterwards appeared within the forest of Nagy Retsky.













